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THE

ENGLISH AT HOME.

ESSAYS FROM THE "*REVUE DES DEUX MONDES.*"

THIRD SERIES.

88449

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

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THE

ENGLISH AT HOME.

CHAPTER I.

DIFFERENT CHARACTER OF THE CHASE AMONG SAVAGE AND CIVILIZED NATIONS — A WEEK AT OLVESTON VICARAGE — BADMINTON AND THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT — A VISIT TO BERKELEY CASTLE — THE OLD ABBEY — PRESENT STATE OF THE PLACE — CONNECTION BETWEEN MEDIÆVAL CASTLES AND MODERN SPORT — THE KENNELS — THE LODGING ROOM OF THE HOUNDS — THE FEEDER — ORIGIN OF THE FOXHOUND — DIGNITY OF THE FOXHOUND — ITS EDUCATION — QUALITIES OF WELL-BRED DOGS — THE COST OF A PACK — HOW IT IS KEPT UP — HUNTERS — STEEPLE-CHASES.

The English have more than one variety of sport; and the turf, of which we wrote in a preceding volume, is very far from satisfying the activity of a race which cultivates strength with the same care and respect as the intellect: they also display a true passion for the chase. An anecdote is told that during the battle of Waterloo it required all the authority of the Duke of Wellington, surnamed on the English side of the channel the Man of Iron, to repress among the British troops the natural instinct of sport at the

sight of hares alarmed by the thunder of firearms, and which got up under the very feet of the combatants. There are rich Englishmen who go to Norway to chase the bear, to Canada to encounter the buffalo, and to the East Indies to come face to face with a tiger. At home they also carry on different modes of warfare against the small number of wild animals left among them. Although there are no stags left in England (except, as I hear, a few in Devonshire) the English have their stag-hunt, for which the noble animals are reared in parks or brought from the forests of the Continent. Scotland has, besides, preserved behind its mountains the primitive fauna, which is either hunted or shot by gliding from bush to bush, from rock to rock, up to the solitary lairs where the deer collect. There are many other varieties of sport: grouse shooting, which annually attracts a great number of gentlemen to the Yorkshire moors; pheasant-shooting, otter-hunting, wild duck shooting, which at times exposes the sportsman to great danger, should he be surprised among the rocks on the coast by the rising tide. I will, however, confine my attention to fox-hunting, the most popular and national of all in England.

Hunting—and the English allow the fact—is a relic of the savage state; but it has undergone many great modifications with the progress of society. The natives of Canada would be greatly

surprised on being told that in England the chase is an amusement; with them it is a daily toil, and the only one they practise. Would they not be still more surprised were they told that the English expend a great deal of trouble and money in keeping up among them a few representatives of that great family of carnivora which the savage tribes have so much interest in destroying?

Hunting, which plays so considerable a part in the history of Great Britain, has also changed its character several times, according as disafforesting, the progress of cultivation, and other causes, effected in the island the extinction of certain zoological families. Without dwelling on the annals of sport, which, however, offer more interest in England than anywhere else, I will proceed to investigate the present state of fox-hunting.

The study of this national pastime naturally embraces three series of facts: the preparations for the hunt, the staff of officials connected with it, and the life of the sportsmen. At Berkeley Castle, in Gloucestershire, we shall find a type of one of these packs, in which the English aristocracy evince such pride; at Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire, we shall be able to form an idea of the staff connected with a fashionable hunt; but it is in the midst of the country population, in a village situated in the west of Eng-

land, that we shall find in its fullest development the enthusiasm felt by the English for an amusement celebrated by the songs of poets, and which exercises so great an influence over rustic manners.

Last autumn I went to pass a week at Olveston in Gloucestershire, with a canon of Bristol Cathedral, the Rev. Henry Moseley, Corresponding Member of the Institut, and one of the most distinguished savans among the Anglican clergy. The vicarage, one of whose wings faces the old church surmounted by a pinnacled tower, is an elegant mansion in the modern style, sheltered like a nest by the dense foliage of a curtain of lofty trees. This church formerly belonged to Bath Abbey; but at present is attached to the Bristol chapter. It is curious to notice in the country parts of England, with what care the monuments of the faith, the charges, benefices, traditions, and lands of the church passed from the hands of the Catholic clergy into those of the Protestant. The very trace of this transition is now all but effaced from the soil of Great Britain. I was glad to study at Olveston the history of modern manners in an English village, and before all the life of the clergy, which offers the foreigner a perfectly new type of character in the country. The English ministers must not be compared with the poor French village curés. They are gentlemen invested with a spiritual power, which, it is

true, finds more than one limit in the dissenting sects, but which all the world recognizes and venerates as a moral magistracy which makes no assault on liberty of conscience. At home, the English vicar is surrounded by all the comfort of life, relieved by the charms of study, literary leisure, and the sacred emotions of family ties. Religious duties are collected and grouped for him round his hearth as round the church. He is priest and father; he has daughters who impart instruction in the schools and distribute alms in the cabins. Everything beneath his peaceful roof breathes an air of prosperity, a simple grandeur and happiness in mental tranquillity. His house is Elijah's tent erected on the side of the hill, and it is pleasant to sojourn there.

Round Olveston, the beauty of the landscape invites to that happiness of wisdom so admirably described in Holy Writ, and which English preachers are fond of taking as their text. The view extends for an immense distance over an horizon of vast and luxuriant fields, studded with tall trees which rise and fall at regular distances with an harmonious movement. So far, the landscape does not differ from the panorama of verdure which is met with in various parts of Great Britain; but these immense carpets of grass are suddenly rent in the distance by the dark and stormy course of the Severn—a river which is two or three miles in width, and which

is filled at high tide,—for the ponderous Atlantic pours its waves violently into the mouth, which is contracted by a double wall of rocks. Beyond the river rise on terraces the mountains, situated in the south of Wales, and forming in the far distance the stern crown of the rich scenery.*

My first care was to inquire whether this part of Gloucestershire was celebrated for fox-hunting, and I speedily learned that the peace of the vicarage was in fact troubled more than once in winter by the sound of the horn, the barking of dogs, and the galloping of horses that passed over the fields with their red-coated riders. I might have suspected it from the nature of the country, for there are features by which a country favourable to this sort of sport may be recognized. The counties of England may be classed in two categories, those which mainly produce grass for cattle, and those which only contain ploughed land. Economists might perhaps be tempted to give the preference to the latter; but the lovers of the noble science—as the English call fox-

* Olveston, which is only a village, has for all that its chronicles. It is said that, at the time of the Conquest, William gave the manor of Aleston (a neighbouring hamlet, now contained in the same parish) to Gwarine of Metz, a descendant of the house of Lorraine. A descendant of the name of Fulk succeeded; he was playing one day at chess with King John, when the latter, doubtless furious at losing the game, almost broke his adversary's head, by dealing him a tremendous blow with the chess-board. Fulk took his revenge, and striking with the same instrument, left King John half dead.

hunting—have their reasons for thinking quite differently, and fox-hunters, who live in more or less grassy counties, regard with a certain amount of pity their brethren condemned to live in arable counties.

This contempt of Nimrod for the plough is explicable through various causes; and in the first place he reproaches land turned up by the share with not retaining the scent of the fox with such fidelity as grass lands. It is true that pastures are generally enclosed by hedges and barriers which oppose the progress of horses; but these are precisely the obstacles which the true fox-hunter likes and seeks. Where would be the pleasure for him if he did not run a risk of breaking his neck? The part of Gloucestershire in which I was, evidently had these advantages in its favour. I was, therefore, not surprised at learning that the hunting country, for there exist here limits determined by old rights or customs, was divided between two powerful noblemen—the Duke of Beaufort and Earl Berkeley.

The family of the Duke of Beaufort is descended from John of Gaunt, fourth son of Edward III. It possesses in the county the royal residence of Badminton and Chepstow Castle, which is in ruins. The old castle of Chepstow is in itself a venerable and picturesque ruin, and a favourite place with tourists. Built on the brow of a precipice, beneath which runs the river Wye,

this castle forms, as it were, a part of the rock which supports it, and with which it has eventually become blended in colour and solidity. The same cloak of ivy which covers the walls and half-fallen towers also lines the sides of the rock, whose base is hidden beneath the waters, but whose head rises boldly amid the ruins. The most curious moment to visit these proud, wild and imposing ruins is at high tide; the waves bathe and furiously besiege the foot of the reef; a little more and they would menace the ancient fragments of architecture which stand over the water calm and impassive, for in their gloomy sorrow they are well aware that they have no other enemy to fear but time.

More than historic reminiscences is attached to this castle: it played an important part in the civil wars, and had even the honour of being besieged by Cromwell in person and resisting him. At a later date, however, it fell, like the rest, into the hands of the parliamentary army; and a soldier, swimming across the river with a knife between his teeth, cut the rope of the boat in which the royalist garrison had hoped to escape. What fortress has not had its prisoner? In one of the towers of Chepstow, the old republican, Henry Martin, was confined for more than twenty years after the Restoration.*

* He had been a member of the High Court which condemned Charles I. to the scaffold. Just after Cromwell had signed the

This ruined castle is at the present day only an abode for historic shadows, owls, and foxes. The present Duke of Beaufort resides twenty or thirty miles distant at his estate of Badminton. There are a thousand things to see and admire at this seigneurial domain,—large buildings sumptuously decorated in the modern taste, a park and magnificent gardens, and a herd of deer and stags amounting to two thousand head; but what I like even more at Badminton is a traditional liberality conveyed in the motto—*mihi et vobis*.

Such a motto expresses British charity—well-regulated charity—which begins at home, but also thinks of others. One of the practices of this maxim is that every traveller who passes the house, has the right to a plate of meat and a glass of beer, if he feel a want of refreshment. In the interior of this wealthy abode, everything speaks of an ancient pastime which has been to some extent perpetuated as a family tradition. Old paintings record on the walls past events of the chase, and display the portraits of several hunters distinguished in their day, as well as those of horses and dogs engaged in stag-hunting. About half a century ago, during the minority of the fifth Duke of Beaufort, this pack of staghounds was converted into one of foxhounds. From that

death-warrant, he daubed the face of Henry Martin, who stood by his side, with the ink-laden pen. The same pen was then handed to Martin, who, after signing in his turn, repeated this coarse jest upon Cromwell's face.

period to the present day, Badminton kennels have always been kept up with princely magnificence. Although the Duke of Beaufort is incontestably one of the first sportsmen in England, we will not stop at the perfectly modern residence of Badminton, in order to furnish an idea of the manners and preparations for the hunt. As the noble science is a mediæval tradition, it will be better to seek the scene of our study at an old castle of old England.

Berkeley Castle had been indicated to me as one of the rare baronial residences which have retained their primitive character in Great Britain. Leaving Olveston in a carriage, I passed on my way through Thornbury, a small town with an old and pretty church. Here I visited the house of Mr. Howard, a great foxhunter, who passes the summer in the north of England, and the winter in Gloucestershire, at Grestow Castle. This old castle has been quite lately restored, but with taste, and in such a way as to scrupulously preserve the style of architecture which flourished between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It formerly belonged to Edward, Duke of Buckingham, who, through his haughty and independent character, drew on himself the hatred of Cardinal Wolsey. The Duke, one day after dinner, according to custom, offered the King on his knees the basin in which he washed his hands. When the King had finished and retired, the Cardinal, in

joke, dipped his hand in the basin while the Duke was still kneeling. The latter regarded the jest as an affront, and, rising, poured the whole of the water into the Cardinal's shoes, who, violently offended, threatened to sit down on the skirts of the Duke's coat. The morrow, the Duke came to Court in a very short pourpoint, and when the King asked the reason, he said, "It is to avoid the effect of the Cardinal's anger, for he has sworn to sit on my coat-skirts." The Duke had his witticism, which made the Court laugh: but the Cardinal had Buckingham's head. The latter, shortly after, was accused of high treason, and tried by his peers, who declared him guilty. Too proud to beg his life of the King, he bravely suffered decapitation.

At the present day Grestow Castle is, in the strictest sense of the term, a hunting-box. On the first floor at least twenty bed-rooms open on a vast corridor, just as in a hotel. These spacious rooms are intended to receive the friends and sportsmen who remain for any length of time at the castle. The furniture in them is simple, massive and severe; I do not even except the bedroom of the lady of the house. Many a London fine lady would think herself lost within these lofty walls, in which none of the delicacies of domestic life are met with, but in which everything is reduced to what is absolutely necessary, at least what is strictly comfortable. The most

highly decorated room is the dining-room, on the ground-floor, which serves as the gathering-place after the chase. The character of this mansion—resembling in this respect all the residences of gentlemen hunters—is hospitality. Mr. Howard, although one of the great friends of the fox (as the destroyers of that animal call themselves) does not keep up a pack at his own expense. Hence, I hastened to continue my journey toward Berkeley Castle.

I at first passed through an extensive but insignificant country, diversified from time to time by the rain-drops of a heavy shower. At length a change in the nature of the road and surrounding country warned me that I was approaching the castle. These old seigneurial residences announce themselves, in fact, one or two miles beforehand, by alleys of old trees which rise towards the skies with an air of pride and dignity. It seems as if the rich fields—better looked after than elsewhere, better shadowed, and lined by quickset hedges,—themselves affect in their way an aristocratic feeling. This road, which winds along a valley, brought me to the little town of Berkeley, which is situated on an eminence, and belongs in great measure to the castle, for the inhabitants are nearly all tenants of his lordship.

The entrance to Berkeley Castle strikes you at the first sight by a character of austere and stern grandeur, which at once carries the mind back to

the gloomiest times of British feudalism. In a first court, which is entered through an archway bearing sculptural ornaments belonging to the Norman style, are ranged at regular distances, guns, with stacks of rusty balls. These cannon, to speak the truth, look to me exactly like a rhetorical trope: they would doubtless be worth no more to defend the castle than *the ancestral sword,* but they harmonize perfectly with the haughty and menacing aspect of the main building. From this court you pass into a second, rendered gloomy by the mass of lofty walls and internal buildings, enveloped in a circle of bastions. The castle is very old; it is said to date back to Roger de Berkeley, who founded it shortly after the Conquest; but as the parts that compose it have been built in succession at different periods, under Henry II., Edward II., and Edward III., it affords an entire history of feudal architecture in England. More than one sort of interest, therefore, attaches to this ancient domain, which at the present day is held by Lord Fitzhardinge, one of the patricians of Great Britain, in whose family, it is said, the wild blood is best kept up which flowed in the veins of the old barons—hunters of beasts and hunters of men. In the avenues leading to the castle, I, however, met a little old gentleman on horseback, who, I was told, was the present Lord of Berkeley; and in his manners I was compelled

to recognize a Nimrod greatly softened by the influences of civilization.

Prior to the existence of the seigneurial domain round which the town of Berkeley is built, there was at the same spot a very celebrated nunnery, which flourished during the Saxon era. This nunnery was governed by an abbess, who, if we may believe the chronicle, was both noble and lovely. The powerful Earl Godwin, who attained such power in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and who already possessed large estates, passing one day through Berkeley, was less affected by the charms of the abbess than by the riches of the abbey. He resolved to appropriate it; and in order to do so had recourse to a stratagem which ecclesiastical writers have qualified as sacrilege. The Earl had a nephew possessing an agreeable face and pleasing manner—in a word, a very dangerous man with women—and he took him with him one day when travelling from Gloucester to Bristol. On the road the young man, who had received his instructions, feigned a sudden indisposition; and as they were at the time close to Berkeley, Godwin confided him to the care of the nuns, and left him in the convent, while he himself continued his journey. Who cannot guess the finale? The young man committed frightful ravages in the hearts of the nuns, and above all in that of the abbess. Consequences resulted which produced a great scandal. Earl Godwin

informed the king of the unworthy conduct of these nuns. The monarch ordered an inquiry; and as the proof which attested to the weakness of these poor girls was not for a moment doubtful, he seized their lands, which he gave to Earl Godwin. His wife Gueda refused, through conscientious scruples, to live on the manor and enjoy the fruits of this land, which she considered, and with reason, unjustly acquired. The Earl himself, the chronicler adds, did not prosper long in iniquity. An island, at that time very fertile, and which formed part of his immense domains, was irrevocably swallowed up by the sea, and what remains of it still bears the name of Goodwin Sands. Finally the Earl and his family were expelled from the kingdom. This legend, however, did not intimidate the lords of Berkeley. At a later date it did not prevent one of them, of the name of Maurice, who lived in the reign of Henry II., from encroaching on the churchyard in order to enlarge his castle, and he did so in defiance of ecclesiastical censure. It was not, however, the old history of the Anglo-Norman nobility which I had come to Berkeley to investigate, but the manner in which life can harmonize, in these baronial residences, with modern society while retaining up to a certain point the manners, tastes, and amusements of the past.

An English moralist has written that men

might be classified by the character of their dwelling-places, as mollusks are by the form of their shell. Without carrying the analogy so far, may we not say at least that these gloomy mediæval residences must most certainly impress on the families inhabiting them from generation to generation peculiar habits and inclinations? At the moment when I was introduced, after crossing the two courts, into the interior of the castle, the family had just finished breakfast. I mention this circumstance, because the round table where their place was still marked by three chairs, produced a miserable effect in a vast dining-hall which would have easily contained upwards of two hundred guests. I at once concluded from this that domestic life must after all be very inconvenient in these princely habitations, for it is crushed by the grandeur and solemnity of an architecture which belongs to another epoch — another mode of life. This dining-hall is in fact monumental, and by the choice of the ornaments announces a decided taste for the chase, which has been perpetuated in the family for centuries, although it has several times changed its character. On the walls, among other trophies, is a coat of mail, as it were, formed of foxes' teeth. In the centre of the hall hangs a large chandelier with natural deer heads at the bases, and antlers in the manner of branches to bear the candles.

From the dining-hall the visitor passes by a labyrinth of staircases, passages, and immense rows, in which the embrasures of the windows testify by their extraordinary depth to the thickness and solidity of the walls. Here is the room in which Queen Elizabeth slept; and we should feel inclined to say it was here, for her silver toilet-boxes, purse, and other relics still figure on the tables or mantel-pieces. The antiquary would have a thousand curious things to note at Berkeley Castle; a chapel lined with carved panels, on the old reading-desk in which is a Bible bearing the date of 1640; a number of historical portraits; the golden keys of the castle, kept under glass; furniture of every epoch; and above all a colossal bed, which bears its age incrusted in the woodwork,—it dates from 1330. I felt a pleasure in mounting to the roof of the building, whence the almost circular form of the castle, the bastions, and ancient ramparts can be distinguished. On one of the terraces which command the fortress live eagles flutter in a cage, whose warlike and savage character harmonizes well with the warlike and savage nature of the buildings that surround them.

This gloomy castle has more than one chronicle to tell, but before all it has preserved the memory of a crime. A narrow flight of steps leads to what is called the dungeon-room; here was assassinated, on a dark and tempestuous

night of September, 1327, Edward II. of England, the weak king who was betrayed and dethroned by his consort. If places have a physiognomy, as people like to believe, this cold, dark, and miserable cell announces nothing reassuring at first sight. It was still more black and sinister at that time, for it only received light through loopholes. Since then, however, two narrow windows have been pierced in the thickness of the wall. All the rest,—the chair on which the imprisoned monarch sat, the bed on which he lay, and on which he was seized by the assassins during sleep,—has remained absolutely in the same state. The sword is still shown which, made red-hot, and introduced, so 'tis said, into the mouth through a hunting horn, was used to burn and pierce the king's entrails. The executioners were the gaolers, John Montravers and Sir Thomas Gournay, to whom the prince had been intrusted; but a dignitary of the church was also implicated. Adam, Bishop of Hereford, had sent to Edward II.'s gaolers this enigmatical sentence: *Eduardum occidere nolite timere bonum est;* which signified, according to the punctuation, "Do not fear to kill Edward, it is a good action;" or else, on the contrary, "Do not kill Edward, it is good to fear it." Now the subtle bishop employed no commas, hoping to escape by this subterfuge the responsibility of the deed, whatever it might be, and wash his hands of the blood which might be shed.

While not regretting my visit to Berkeley Castle, I left it with a heart oppressed by a feeling of sorrow. What must be, I said to myself, daily existence within these old walls, haunted by the memories and shadows of the past? beneath these ceilings, dulled by the secular majesty of ennui? amid these stiff family portraits, this furniture which has seen generations pass, and these toilet objects which seem to be awaiting ghosts? I understand perfectly well that English noblemen, wearied of living with the dead, with history, with the monotonous and imposing aspect of centuries, seek out of doors distraction in a violent exercise consecrated by custom. It is very true that Berkeley Castle could not be regarded at the present day as a type of the residences of the British nobility. Very few old families have preserved intact their ancient baronial abode. But was it not from these old stone nests that the chase issued originally, like the falcon that takes its flight? I therefore asked leave to visit the kennels, which was indeed the principal object of my journey.

According to the language of the teachers of the noble science, a good kennel is the foundation of the chase. The most renowned in England are those of the Dukes of Rutland and Beaufort, the Earls of Yarborough and Fitzwilliam. The packs which render them illustrious have been handed down from father to son in these four

families for upwards of a century. From these establishments have also sprung the other packs at the present day spread over Great Britain. The kennels of Earl Fitzhardinge hold a very honourable rank in the number; they are situated some distance from the castle, as are the hunting stables. Over the door I counted twenty-seven foxes' heads nailed up and arranged symmetrically. This trophy announced the exploits of the year, and we were only in September, that is to say, almost at the opening of the hunting season, which begins in August and ends in the May of the following year.

I was introduced into the kennels by the keeper, a man of tall stature, armed with a whip, which he never lays aside, as being the symbol of his authority. An English archæologist has written a long and learned dissertation to prove that originally the sceptre was a whip-handle. This symbol of omnipotence has remained in its primitive form in the hands of the keeper, a functionary whose duty it is to provide the dogs with food and keep them in good health. We first entered the boiling-house, where were two immense iron boilers solidly fixed over brick furnaces; one of these was used to boil oatmeal, the other to cook horseflesh. From this dog-kitchen we passed into a first yard, carefully paved, exposed to the sun, and refreshed by a spring of limpid water, which constantly runs into a stone

basin. It is here that a part of the pack takes its recreation during the days of captivity. To the right of this yard opens a first lodging-room about twelve to fourteen feet high, paved with glazed tiles, and lighted by four windows, which resemble, through their shape and position, the windows of our churches. The walls were irreproachably whitewashed, and from the floor rose bedsteads, if such a name can be given to wooden frames about twenty inches in height, on which a layer of fresh straw is spread. On entering this room I found myself surrounded by a number of dogs with straight legs, round feet, wide backs, and long huge muzzles, but whose honest faces announced, for all that, kindness and a desire to form my acquaintance. There are at present fifty-seven couples in the Badminton kennels, formerly there were ninety. Most of these dogs were born on the establishment, others have been given to the Duke of Beaufort or purchased from amateurs, for no pack could be kept up to the mark without an infusion of fresh blood.

The different parts of the kennel are all constructed on the same model: there are merely more or fewer yards and lodging-rooms, according to the importance of the pack. The only spot still left for us to describe is the feeding-room, a species of covered gallery or verandah, which runs all along the kennel, and in which the dogs can take their meals in the open air, while sheltered from

the sun and rain. They are only fed once a day. As it happened to be the dinner hour when I arrived, I witnessed this scene, which was not deficient in animation. A very long wooden trough filled with oatmeal was placed in the centre of the feeding-room, and from the bubbling surface of the food there rose through a cloud of smoke an odour which soon attracted the entire pack. The distribution of property is among animals, as among men formed into a society, a great subject of dispute. Each strove to maintain his place at the table, and more than one powerful dog seemed disposed to discuss the economical question with his brethren by showing his teeth. Soon, however, thanks perhaps to the presence of the feeder, order was re-established; a circle of long muzzles perfectly disguised the shape of the trough, and while the guests silently devoured their frugal meal, all their tails wagged powerfully from right to left with an oscillating movement intended to express joy.

All these dogs bear the name of foxhounds, and constitute at the present day a very distinct race in Great Britain. This race, however, did not exist two centuries ago.* Whence does it come? This is a question which has greatly

* No precise document is to be found in the annals of British sports and pastimes which allows the origin of this animal, formed to some extent by man's hand, to be referred to a certain date. If, however, we accept the authority of the Rev. William Chaffin, who compiled anecdotes of the chase, the first regular pack of fox-

occupied the archæologists of the noble science as well as naturalists, and in spite of their labours a certain obscurity still prevails as to the origin of this peculiar enemy of the fox. The best founded opinion, as I think, is that the foxhound is descended from the talbot. Now what is the talbot? In the parks of some country houses, a breed of large dogs is still kept up, which Landseer has immortalized in several of his pictures. They are intractable and dangerous animals, recognizing no authority, and which the whip itself does not prevent from satisfying, where opportunity offers, a natural inclination for blood. They are, besides, slow in their speed, and would not be at all adapted for fox-hunting, as now practised with swift horses. The talbot, therefore, appears at the present day only at intervals as an historic dog; it belonged to the family of bloodhounds, to which Walter Scott frequently refers, and which the Thrapstone Association wished to employ in 1803, in the pursuit of murderers, for the qualities of an excellent sergeant of police were recognized in it. This ancestor of the race has served for two varieties, the staghound and the foxhound—the latter is only a modification of the former; but having been differently trained for generations and employed for another sort of chase, it can be at once recognized by its stature,

hounds was established in the west of England by Thomas Fownes, Squire of Stapleton, in Dorsetshire, about the year 1730.

and, as amateurs say, by the general style of its person. More modern than the staghound, from which it is incontestably descended; it owes to its origin and to numerous crossings the great qualities which distinguish it, such as strength, courage, docility, speed, and a very sure nose. Of all running dogs it is declared to be the one which has most devil in it. An Englishman, Mr. Ward, obtained, in his day, that is to say some years ago, the greatest celebrity through the care which he devoted as breeder of fox-hounds, to this important branch of the art of the chase.

The improvement of the canine race generally has been, and still is, the daily object of assiduous care in Great Britain. There are dog races, which are announced beforehand in the newspapers; the candidates start at a given signal (generally a pistol-shot), and traverse the course amid the emotions and applause of the crowd: they are employed in rabbit-hunting or even rat-killing in establishments devoted to this sort of sport, at the door of which the following amusing device may be read as a manner of sign, "A good stock of rats always on hand." From time to time, too, dog shows are held in nearly all the large cities of England. The winners at different meetings, where some have gained as much as 250*l.*, figure at these exhibitions with their trophies—cups, collars, and gold and silver medals. One

of these shows, which I visited in London, attracted on the first day 4000 visitors, although the admission was one shilling. Of course, the foxhound has also been encouraged in various ways.

A few years ago, an amateur, Mr. Meynell, made a wager of 500 guineas to run two of his foxhounds against two other dogs of the same breed, belonging to Mr. Barry, a brother sportsman. Another event produced even greater excitement in the sporting world; I mean the great bet of 1000 guineas, between the Duke of Beaufort and the Earl of Winchelsea. The point to be decided was whether the dog or the horse employed in fox-hunting was the faster. What sort of glory has been wanting to the foxhound! He has been celebrated by the verse of Somervile and the prose of Beckford, who is justly regarded as the best classic writer on sport. In our own days, an English artist, Mr. Francis Grant, who has expressly visited several packs in Great Britain, has introduced into his hunting pictures portraits of some of these dogs which are so sought by the aristocracy. To have a fine pack of foxhounds is, in fact, a species of point of honour with a great British nobleman, and as it were an obligation imposed on him by social claims.

The feeder who introduced me into the Berkeley kennels is what the English call a Jack-of-all-

trades. Although placed at the lowest scale of the hunting organization, he is expected to keep the pack in order and maintain discipline. He sleeps in a room built expressly for him in one of the departments of the kennel, and his interference at times becomes necessary to repress seditions which break out among his people. As his face expressed a sort of rough kindliness, and a desire to satisfy my curiosity, I asked him several questions about the duties of his office, and the nature of the dogs with whom he had to deal. He told me that foxhounds were, in some respect the soldiers of the canine race; they live together in kennels, as in barracks; traverse the country in close columns, and do not recognize any of the obligations of civil life. The pack thus presents an image of the primitive organization of the chase.

"These dogs," he added, "are all of high blood, and you know a good dog shows his breeding. Still they must be taught. Those not born in the establishment find the kennel very monotonous on being entered; but they end by growing accustomed to it. We also take them out to exercise during summer at daybreak, when the air is fresh, and the ground damp with dew. Have you not noticed that they all have their ears slightly rounded? It is an operation performed with the scissors, and when they are young, in order to prevent their long hanging ears from

being torn at a later date by the thorns and brambles when they go through the woods. To those who do not know them, all these dogs are alike; but for me who pass my life with them, I know that they differ as much from each other as men engaged in the same profession. Most frequently they inherit the faculties of their progenitors. Some of them take to hunting on the first day—it is in the blood; they fly in pursuit of the fox by instinct, just as a baby fastens to the nipple; others, again, have great difficulty in learning their trade. We never punish them for a first fault; but, if they repeat it, the whip gives them a good lesson on the loins. The question, after all, is not so much to be severe with them as to be just. Well-bred hounds have a sense of justice; they now in their conscience when they are unjustly punished, or when a deserved correction is inflicted on them. All depends on the manner of treating them; and, as we say, it is the good hunter who makes the good pack.

"I do not like in foxhounds a servile and cautious submission. The difference between high and low bred hounds is, that the former, although quite as docile as the latter, obey with an air of grace and pride. Still, in spite of the best training, there are thoroughly incorrigible hounds even in the most fashionable packs. Some of them incessantly pick quarrels with their companions, or disorganize the hunt by

giving tongue at every moment. A good dog must not open its mouth except when it has something to say. You smile on thinking perhaps that men do not always do so much. That is true; but if you are initiated in the secrets of fox-hunting you must understand the fatal consequences of a false alarm for the success of the day. The worst is that some of these faults are contagious: one noisy or undisciplined hound is enough to demoralize a whole pack. In such a case he must be got rid of."

"What do you mean by that?" I asked, guessing from the mysterious expression of his face that he meant something serious.

"Well, yes," he replied, "an example is required now and then. The hound condemned to death after ripe reflection is led from the kennel with a rope round his neck and hanged. The other foxhounds are thus warned to keep on their guard."

"Do you really believe that the other dogs understand the motive of the sentence and the nature of the execution?"

"I do not doubt it," he replied, with the most serious air in the world.

The feeder, though a stanch partizan of punishment by death, was sincerely attached to his hounds, and liked to talk of them in terms of praise.

"They are good children, after all," he

hastened to add; "they have especially, and in the highest degree, the feeling of mutual defence, and help one another when it is necessary. I should like you to see them during the night; if you are a painter (two or three artists have already paid a visit to our kennels), you would find a subject there for a true picture. It is curious to notice how the poor animals, often worn out by the chase, lie on their common bed so as not to annoy one another; they will even place themselves so that their body may serve as a pillow to their neighbour. When the good understanding among the pack is accidentally disturbed, it is most frequently the fault of one or two bad characters. In most kennels there is a master-dog, who exercises a real authority over the whole pack. All goes well so long as he does not abuse his power; but if he become a tyrant to his companions, if he illtreat them and torment them without a reason, he runs a great risk of arousing a formidable revolt against himself. Have you not heard tell of one of these master-dogs that was killed and devoured by his subjects at Mr. Conyers' kennel at Copt Hall?"

"Not only was I ignorant of the fact," I answered, "but you greatly surprise me; these dogs surrounding us have so gentle an air, and offer their heads so readily to the hand that pats them."

"Do not trust entirely to looks: the fox-hound, though docile and tamed, retains for all that savage instincts, which are at times aroused by the agency of certain circumstances. Not long ago a keeper met with the same fate as the dog to which I just now alluded. If you ask my opinion, I will say I firmly believe that he had behaved badly to the pack. The same animals which revolt so brutally against unjust strength, testify under other circumstances a touching respect for innocence and weakness. One of the first sports-men in England had a little child that disap-peared from the house, and was sought in all directions, when the idea occurred to both father and mother that the boy had probably slipped into the kennels. This idea gave rise to the most dreadful anxiety, for they knew there were in one of the compartments of the kennel several very savage bitches with pups, which no one dared approach. What was the joy and surprise of the parents when on entering this dangerous part of the kennels they found the child riding on the back of one of these fierce bitches, which allowed him to play with it with the gentleness and complaisance of a lamb!"

This conversation with the feeder about the life of a foxhound and the manners of the kennel still left me without any information as to the pecuniary organization of these establishments. Some select packs have been sold in England for

as much as 2000 guineas; but the ordinary price is from 500*l.* to 1000*l.* This first outlay only represents the smallest part of the expenses; it is not enough to purchase the dogs, but the men who look after them must be kept and paid. The number of hounds composing a pack depends on the nature of the country, and the number of meets a week. These two circumstances introduce, as may be supposed, great variations in the budget of expenses. The best thing, therefore, is to give the general results. There are at the present day in England and Wales one hundred hunting establishments, without counting those that flourish in Scotland and Ireland. Each of these hundred packs, kept up either by very rich individuals, or by a system of subscriptions, costs on an average 1500*l.* a-year, or an annual expense of 150,000*l.* for the whole. It is true that in this account is included the cost of keeping up the stables, for in fox-hunting two allies are indispensable—hounds and horses.

These hunters constitute, like the foxhound, a peculiar race, created, or, at least, formed by trade with a view to the national pastime. I saw some very fine models in the stables at Berkeley Castle. The modern hunter greatly differs from what the animal formerly was in Great Britain. As the character of foxhunting has changed during the last century, it has been found necessary to modify the character of the animals

employed for the exercise. The most striking feature in this chase being at the present day speed, the present hunter bears a singular resemblance to the racehorse; we might almost say it is the same animal with more strength and endurance. One of the great qualities that distinguish it, is proving what the English call an excellent leaper. In order to understand the value of this natural talent, which is carefully cultivated in the young horse, and without which it would not be a finished hunter, it must be remembered that the hunting-field is most usually studded with every sort of obstacle, bars, gates, hedges, ditches—some of which, to use the English metaphor, offer to the view frightful "yawners." Of all these obstacles the one which most checks a sulky or inexperienced horse is a wide brook. The art of the horseman consists in such a case in making his horse gallop at full speed, so that it cannot see the water until close to it, and then clears it at a bound. It was for the purpose of developing these peculiar faculties that steeple-chases were established in England, less than fifty years ago. This amusement at the present day enjoys a great popularity, although some Englishmen condemn it, on principle, as inhuman. The sight of these steeple-chases is certainly very fine and very exciting; but I must confess that a great part of the interest is based on the dangers of every de-

scription incurred by men and horses. The latter, galloping at a pace of twenty miles an hour over a course bristling with difficulties of every description, recoil before nothing, and take all the obstacles by storm, as it were.

I now knew the organization of the kennels and stables, which form to some extent the starting-point of fox-hunting; but other things are wanted besides dogs and horses: for instance, a perfect staff of officers, who must possess special information, and each performing different duties, according to his title. If any one desire to form an idea of this staff, and of the importance the English attach to a style of sport which costs a great deal of money, employs many people, and finds a living for a large number of families, he should proceed to the small town of Melton. Melton Mowbray, in Leicestershire, is in fact the metropolis of fox-hunting.

CHAPTER II.

THE COUNTRY WHICH FOX-HUNTERS SEEK—APPEARANCE OF MELTON AT NIGHTFALL—CONVERSATIONS WITH A SPORTSMAN—WHAT CONSTITUTES THE LIFE AND FORTUNES OF MELTON—OLD AND NEW MODE OF FOX-HUNTING—THE MASTER—AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE MASTER AND THE LANDOWNERS—DUTIES AND RARE QUALITIES OF A MASTER OF HOUNDS—THE REWARD OF HIS TROUBLE—FOX-HUNTING REGARDED AS A POLITICAL INSTITUTION—THE HUNTSMAN—HIS KNOWLEDGE OF NATURAL HISTORY—THE WHIPPERS-IN—INCONVENIENCES OF ABSOLUTE POWER—THE EARTH-STOPPER—BAG-FOXES AND THE TRUE FOX—MANNERS OF THE LATTER—IT HAS BEEN CALUMNIATED—ITS QUALITIES, FAULTS, AND STRATAGEMS—AN UNSUCCESSFUL HUNT.

I LEFT London by train, in the company of an old sportsman who does not live in Leicestershire, but goes sometimes to Melton for his pleasure. Here assemble every winter the aristocracy of fox-hunting. The part of the county of Leicester which we traversed on the wings of steam, had nothing remarkable about it as regarded beauty of scenery: it was a mountainous and wooded country, intersected by valleys, rivers, brooks and tall hedges, defended by a double ditch. I imparted my impressions to my travelling companion, who seemed to hear them with surprise.

"After all," he said to me, "fox-hunters are neither poets nor tourists: they have a mode of their own of regarding the beauties of a landscape. Does not the one you have before you abound in varieties of ground? Look around you: what glorious obstacles!—what magnificent neck-breakers! This is what we esteem before all else in the vicinity of Melton Mowbray. I should be tempted to believe," he added, with a smile, "that Reynard is of our opinion: like the amateurs who hunt him, he seems to find a pleasure in danger, and must we not attribute to such a cause the preference he exhibits for this rough country?"

While conversing, we arrived at Melton, whose ancient name is Medelturnum; and it must be allowed that it required all the conjuring peculiar to English pronunciation to contract it in that fashion. The town stands in a valley, on the banks of the river Eye. It is small, old, but decently built, clean, and liberally lighted; it owes its growth, relative prosperity, and the improvements it has undergone lately, to the famous fox-hunting. This sport begins in November, and continues for five months of the year, during which hunting men flock in from all parts of England. There is no lack of hotels to receive them; and it is stated that the stables can hold nearly seven hundred horses. In spite of these advantages, Melton is not at first sight an agree-

able town: you must not seek there any of the amusements which you often find in the smallest places, and of which the English are so jealous. I asked my companion whether there were a theatre and a concert-room.

"At Melton," he told me, "the finest music—that which most delights the ears of the inhabitants, is at nine at night in December—the clanking of the horses' shoes on the pavement; for this announces a meet for the morrow. As for a theatre, this small town was formerly celebrated for its cockpits; but the law some years ago suppressed this inhuman sport throughout the kingdom, and I am not disposed to grumble about it. At the present day, the drama which meets with most success at Melton is the death of the fox: I confess that this drama is performed almost daily by the same actors, but for all that, never fails to excite new emotions. Fox-hunting is a pleasure of which a man never grows palled if he love it. For my part, I was not born a sportsman: a youthful whim—a secret marriage, followed by ruinous consequences, and the death of the woman I loved—are the circumstances which impelled me to a mode of life but little suited to my character and the nature of my early studies; but I have contracted with time a passion which defies the chill of years for this masculine and healthy exercise. There is, in fact, nothing like fox-hunting to put in prac-

tice the Horatian maxim: *Nec turpi ignosce senecte.*"

We passed the first day of our arrival at Melton in visiting several hunting-establishments, which surpass in their way anything to be seen in England. Every sportsman who resides on the spot has in his stables, on an average, a dozen hunters; but some of them keep from fourteen to twenty, and have more for their private use. This great number of horses devoted to the service of a single hunter, is explained by the nature of the country. In Leicestershire, where the ground is uneven, and intersected by systematic obstacles, every good fox-hunter is accustomed to have at least two horses out on the same day, one to relieve the other. It has been recognized that this practice was a saving, for it spares the health of the horses, which, were it not for this, would not long endure too lengthy hunts. I speak, of course, of a relative saving, for each of these noble animals costs at least two to three hundred guineas; and the sum required to keep up a stud of twelve hunters is estimated at 1000*l.* a year. After such sacrifices, who will be surprised to find at Melton a very large number of celebrities, who fear no rivalry in the rest of England; and who give, as it were, the tone to fox-hunting? The well-known title of "Meltonians" is applied much less to the inhabitants of the town, than to a fraternity of real gentlemen who live in the

locality and cultivate in common the noble science with all the ardour with which a natural feeling of rivalry inspires men engaged in the same round of business or pleasure.

This school is, before all, distinguished by the style,—a vague word, embracing at once the manner of hunting, the well-groomed horses, and the attire of the sportsmen. The Meltonian, with his red coat, black velvet cap, white leather breeches, and yellow-coloured tops, represents the *beau ideal* of an English hunter. A young man who aspires to a distinguished place in the sporting world seeks, therefore, to win his spurs in the society of Melton Mowbray. In this town a distinction must be drawn between two classes of sportingmen: in the first place those who are resident, and who, having an enormous fortune, keep up a hunting establishment; and then those who come every winter to spend some time at the headquarters of elegant sportsmen. The latter, though strangers to Melton, do not the less spend a great deal of money. The sum they leave behind them annually is estimated at 50,000*l*. Now, as some of them do not enjoy an unlimited income, I am inclined to concur in Lady Blessington's opinion. Marriage, according to this lady, "is a saving for young men of fashion, even if they only marry a moderate dower, owing to the pecuniary sacrifices which a bachelor's life imposed on them."

On the road, my guide pointed out to me in

the town some of the glories of Melton. This gentleman, to hear him, was a perfect horseman, what he called a fine bridle hand; this other did not hunt in so grand a style, but his seat was sure. Toward evening we took a walk in the country; for the sportsman desired to explain to me the mechanism of hunting, while showing me the field of battle as he called it. The trees were nearly leafless; but the autumn, though already far advanced, had impoverished nature without saddening it, and I soon became reconciled with the scenery, which, when seen more closely, is not without character. One of the merits of fox-hunting is, that it has given sportsmen a winter-poetry,—the season of the year which most requires attractions. They find, in fact, wild beauties in the gloomy heather, in the russet moan of the thickets, in the woods disturbed by the sibylline voices of the wind, which babbles among the denuded and interlaced branches.

The sportsman was kind enough to explain to me certain details about fox-hunting, with all the method of a professor of the noble science.

"I will not talk to you about hunting," he said to me, "for you will see that to-morrow. Any one present for the first time at such an exciting scene can only form a confused idea of our manœuvres, unless he be previously acquainted with the history and organization of the art of

venery. You are already aware that fox-hunting has undergone great changes in England during the last fifty years. Formerly the hunters met before cock-crow; and frequently the hounds, posted beforehand along a hedge, awaited day-break to dash into the copse where their enemy was concealed. It is not the same now-a-day. The hunt begins relatively late in the day, and is carried on, if I may hazard the expression, by steam. The difference between the old style and the new may, however, be summed up in two words: formerly they spent a few minutes in finding, and hours in killing the fox; now, we spend hours in finding, and a few minutes are frequently sufficient to exterminate the animal."

"And to which of the two systems," I here interrupted him, "do you give the preference?"

"In truth," he resumed, "I do not know: there is much to be said on both sides. We find the method of our fathers very slow: if they returned to this world, they would perhaps find ours too fast. They would say to us, 'You race, but no longer hunt.' It is possible that we have followed in this the example of the florists, who, after exhausting a series of combinations, set about re-commencing a new one, for no other reason than a desire of innovation. I should not be astonished, either, if the age of railways, steamers, and electric telegraphs has imprinted, without our being conscious of it, the character

of movement and quickness even on amusements the most remote from trade. However this may be, you at once understand that the new mode of hunting demands greater speed in the horses and more boldness in the riders than the old fox-hunting.

"At the head of this little army which proposes to take the field during the winter season, stands the master, sometimes also called the Master of Foxhounds. It is a dignity greatly sought after, and one of the greatest honours which a gentleman can acquire in all those English counties where fox-hunting is held in honour. His duties are, of course, gratuitous—I might even say that they are very expensive; for, in most instances, he must keep the pack, horses and an entire hunting-staff. But it is not every man who can ruin himself in this noble sport: the master must be elected or approved by the landowners of the district. This situation—the highest of all that a true sportsman can desire—is generally occupied in the country by lords or squires. The British squirearchy constitute, according to our ideas, an unique class in the world, an equivalent for which cannot be found in any other nation. You must have seen long ago that we are an hierarchical nation: rightly or wrongly, we have a respect for blood. Would you now know what we admire above all in gentlemen? They have nothing mercantile

about them; they resolutely place honour above all interests; and if they have once given their word, they keep it."

"This feeling," I remarked, "astonishes somewhat in a people which owes to commerce a great part of its glory and political resources."

"That is true," he continued: "we owe a great deal to commerce; but a great society cannot be made with a single element. It is exactly because we are a nation of merchants that we esteem in a high degree the opposite qualities, and that we are anxious to preserve a class of men living in another sphere, and on other traditions."

"One of the first cares of the master, who has been honoured by the confidence of the other hunters, and who proposes to keep the pack at his own expense, is to obtain a large hunting-district. Perhaps there are still in England masters possessing an entire fox-hunting country; but they are very rare, and for my part I know of none. Most of the masters are consequently obliged to come to an understanding with the other landowners, and especially with those to whom the coverts belong. The permission is nearly always granted; but on one condition,—that the hunt will be properly conducted. You see at once that the master is not so independent as he seems. The other landowners, in permitting him to go over their estates, acquire thus, up to a certain point, the right of interfering with the hunt.

Fox-hunting is, in this respect, an image of our institutions, which virtually combine very extensive powers in certain men; but each of these powers encounters at every moment limits in practice. Another duty of the master is to take measures for preserving foxes; for, were it not so, the combat would soon cease, as you French gentlemen say, for want of combatants. In fact, that the fox has not long ago disappeared in England, like its old comrades, the bear, the wolf and the wild boar, is not the fault of the country-people, who would soon have got rid of it had they been left alone: no, it is the fault of the hunters. On this account, at least, it owes them gratitude; and I conceive that, from this point of view, we might be called the friends of this troublesome animal. It is preserved, I allow, to be killed; and when you reflect on the carnage which annually takes place, you will be possibly surprised that the race of our British foxes is not yet extinct. To secure this, a careful surveillance has been required, and a number of customs which have all the force of laws.

"The fox has two private enemies—the landowners who breed game in parks and reserved places, and the farmers. You can imagine that the rogue plays them many an ugly trick—it is his nature: here he carries off a rabbit or a pheasant, there he devours a fowl. The English farmers whose poultry-yard he has ravaged during the

night might feel inclined to take justice in their own hands and shoot the marauder, but as a general rule they dare not, so greatly do they fear the anger of the hunters. It is a thousand to one that, if the fact were known, the farmer's crops would be trampled by the horses—his hedges destroyed, and his barns perhaps menaced. I do not approve of this mode of acting, and agree with you that it is utterly illegal; certainly the victims of this act of vandalism have the right of appealing to the law; but the chase, being a mediæval amusement, has perpetuated in the country the manners and habits of feudalism up to a certain point. Fortunately for us sportsmen, if the farmers do not like the fox they like fox-hunting. It is, however, necessary to know them, and live among them, in order to detect their real feelings in this matter. Speak to them privately, they will complain bitterly of the consequences of fox-hunting, such as crops destroyed or damaged, fences broken, hedges pulled down by the red-coated invaders. See them after that, at a dinner or sportsmen's meeting; they will furiously applaud the toast in honour of fox-hunting, and drink bumpers to the health of their enemy. Observe them before all at a meet; in their ardour to arrive first at the spot on their heavy but fiery horses, they sometimes disturb the operations of the day. As you may suppose, the master requires a certain amount of diplo-

macy in order to make his neighbour accept with good grace the divers inconveniences of fox-hunting. Do you not admire, for instance, the bold coolness of the Duke of Buccleuch, who, speaking to his farmers and trying to combat the false prejudices which are raised in the country against fox-hunting, told them that the wheat and the grass only grew the better for having been trampled by the horses.

"These negotiations are as nothing compared with the duties which await the master in the field. In the first place he must always be to the moment at the meet. You are sufficiently acquainted with our manners to know that exactness is the politeness of Englishmen, but the punctuality of the master is proverbial. He never arrives too late, that is a matter of course, and at the same time he must not arrive too soon. On the ground he must at once take the command of the hunt. This is no slight affair, and he requires for it all the qualities of a general united to the peculiar science of sport. The master must be a good rider, have a chest voice, a commanding glance, the manners of a gentleman, and that external appearance which commands respect. I am speaking here of the ideal, and do not pretend to say that all our masters are formed on this model; but they are generally distinguished men. Do not leave the fact out of sight that they have to maintain order in the field. This task is

sometimes very difficult, for he has to check and direct a pack of impetuous dogs, a staff of functionaries who believe, and with some reason, that they understand their speciality better than the master, and lastly an undisciplined band of hunters and idlers. Cannot you see at once that this requires a sort of natural gift, readiness of mind, judgment, and before all a deal of firmness associated with extreme politeness? Virtually a perfect master ought to have the iron character of the Duke of Wellington combined with the courtesy of Lord Chesterfield. Although the responsibility of the hunt is shared between the different grades, it is the master who bears the heaviest burden—the success or failure of the day.

"Fox-hunting would no longer be an amusement were success always certain; we must expect disappointments. I even fancy they are necessary for a time to keep the men as well as the horses on the *qui vive*. There are, as we say, white days and black days, the chance of winning and the chance of losing; but if the hounds are disappointed for several weeks in succession in finding a fox, they end by being discouraged and losing all hope. Woe then on the master of foxhounds! His sacrifices, his good intentions, his efforts will not protect him from the barbs of criticism. Instead of thanking him for the expenses he has incurred and the trouble he has taken, his neighbours tear him to pieces, as if to

avenge the dogs for having had nothing to bite but the air. Such conduct may appear to you severe, but after all is it not just? Every prerogative entails duties. Every dignity has its obligations. The man who undertakes to hunt a country, even at his own charges, is bound to fulfil his engagements, and knowledge and a character equal to the responsibility incurred are expected from him.

"Do not forget, either, that the hunt virtually belongs to all, since all help it to a certain extent by allowing the fox to eat their game, and opening to the hunters the coverts and coppices in which the brute takes shelter. The master is therefore, after all, only a sort of representative who must afford his constituents pleasure, and the latter have a right, up to a certain point, to ask an explanation of faults which he may repeat through ignorance or weakness. Up to this point I have supposed that the pack belonged to him. But this is not the case in every English county, for many packs are kept up by subscription. In the latter case the master is only in reality the head of a company. Need I add that his duties in that case become more delicate and far more difficult to fulfil, since he really only exercises a granted and precarious authority over the hunters whom he represents?"

On reflecting over the portrait which had just been traced for me by the sportsman, and the

necessary qualities which a master of hounds must combine, I was astonished that there were so many gentlemen in England to compete for an ungrateful office, in which there is a loss of a great deal of time and money, practical knowledge to acquire, and often, after all this, severe blame to receive. He hastened to reply to my objections.

"I see," he resumed, "that you are still ignorant of one phase of our country life. Fox-hunting is, from a certain point of view, a political institution. Every country gentleman has an interest in standing well with his neighbours and the farmers of his district; now nothing increases the popularity of a squire like the respect which he pays to a national amusement, in which all social conditions and all ages in England take an extreme pleasure. The master of hounds who behaves politely to all classes, who sends from time to time to farmers' wives a present of game to make up for the losses which the visits of master Reynard has produced in the poultry-yard, is nearly sure to see himself adored in his neighbourhood, and thus extend the radius of a social influence which is based before all on sympathy. One of these who died too young, Sir Harry Goodrick, had acquired in his county an incontestable reputation by saying one hunting day to the farmers, who in their impatience got in the way of the hounds, 'My friends, you have as

much right to be here as myself; but pray withdraw a little, and remain quiet.' As the interests are, moreover, reciprocal, the labourers, landlords, and tradespeople are not unaware that fox-hunting is a source of profit for the locality. In the first place it attracts a great many people, and the keeping up the pack and stables occupies a great number of men, and spreads a good deal of money about. Another advantage, and this I place in the first rank, is that the hunting establishments induce the nobility and gentry to reside on their estates. What is, after all, the great wound of Ireland? It is that a portion of the notable landowners have deserted that unhappy island, and spend elsewhere the riches which their native country produces. There is nothing of the sort to apprehend in the English counties where fox-hunting is kept up. The taste for this exercise, the honour of being at the head of a pack and an army of hunters, the sacrifices made, attach the gentry to their residences, especially during that season of the year when, were it not for sport, they would be most attracted by pleasure to the great cities. On the other hand, the hunt produces relations between the master and the yeomen, between the latter and the labourers, which tend to draw together the various social conditions."

The sportsman had thus enlarged on the duties of the master, because the latter is at the head of

an army of huntsman; but he also told me that fox-hunting was based on the principles of a division of labour. After the master comes the huntsman. The latter is an official paid by the squire at those places where there is one rich enough to keep a pack at his own cost, or else by a system of subscription. Do not expect anything, however, of a man who embraced this profession as a livelihood; in order to succeed, he must be an enthusiast for his art. There are huntsmen who have received education, although generally an innate taste for the open air and manly exercises has led them when boys to play truant on the backs of horses. They are most frequently types—men with a fixed idea which they pursue during their whole life, and some of them figure on the field of honour up to the age of sixty. Nothing that happens to thwart their object or check their favourite amusement finds mercy from their impatience. An anecdote is told of a huntsman who, on a day when the wind faintly carried the scent of the fox, began inhaling the air violently, and finding it laden with a perfume of violets, whose dense masses grew on the skirt of a wood, exclaimed, "Confound those stinking violets!" Another called swallows birds of ill-omen; they announce the end of winter, and with the winter fox-hunting ends.

Do not believe that on this account the huntsman is indifferent to nature; on the contrary, no

man is better acquainted than he is with all the features of the country where the hunt takes place. He seems solely to have the firm conviction that the world was created with a view to fox-hunting. While hunting, all nature talks to him. He knows the value of all the objects that pass before his eyes; he is acquainted with the habits of the raven or magpie, whose flight often indicates the direction which the fox has taken, and the sight of a flock of sheep in the distance, is sufficient for him to judge by the air of the animals whether the enemy is near them; he must above all be on good terms with the pack. Just as Cæsar knew the names of all his soldiers, the huntsman must know the names of all his dogs, the qualities of each, and its mode of hunting. As for their genealogy, he knows it by heart, and frequently his children inherit his heraldic science in this respect. It is stated that some sportsmen, being one day at dinner with a celebrated Scotch huntsman, were discussing the breed of one of the dogs belonging to the pack, but none of them could decide it exactly. "Go and fetch your sister," the huntsman said to one of his sons. This sister, a girl of sixteen, came in and solved the problem without hesitation. At home, the huntsman, in spite of the rather rough nature of his occupation, is an excellent man, especially if you manage to catch him in his good hours, that is to say, on his return from a successful hunt.

There is now in England a considerable number of celebrated huntsmen, most of whom have gone through accidents which have exposed their lives to danger; but they generally seem to share the opinion of one of the number, who said that a man's limbs were never so solid, as when they had been frequently mended.

The huntsman has under his orders two whippers-in. These two allies must, before all, be bold riders, and run frightful risks at times with their horses. This means, in hunting parlance, that they are allowed to run the risk of being drowned or breaking their necks more often than the master or the huntsman. Their place in the field is with the dogs, whom they frequently correct in a very brutal manner, and whose strategic movements they direct. The first whipper-in generally keeps in the middle of the pack, and the second behind it. There are, however, two systems which divide the opinion of hunting men: one consists in letting the hounds alone after consulting the wind, and the other in commanding all their manœuvres. The partizans of the first method appeal to the authority of Beckford, who wrote that hounds left to themselves would rarely kill the fox. It has, however, been observed on various occasions that they knew more on certain points than the hunters themselves, and that they did not always require the advice of the huntsman, after losing

a fox, to recognize their error of themselves and change their direction. This is, as in the science of warfare, a difficult point to seize and fix: it is a question of taste, tact, and experience. Young huntsmen, jealous about displaying their talent, leave no initiation to their soldiers (I mean their hounds), and necessarily keep them in hand. The inconvenience of this system, when carried to an excess, is to rob the hounds of all self-confidence. They thus learn to depend solely on the master, while they ought above all to rely on their own value and instincts.

In the eyes of every enthusiastic hunter they are noble and powerful creatures, and a rivalry prevails among them which does not exclude a hierarchical feeling. Foxhounds know one another, and seem to do homage to the diversity of their natural gifts. You will see them in the field yield their place through deference to another hound, which they know to be cleverer than themselves, at a given moment, and resume their rank when the effect they desired to produce has been obtained. Men appropriate their exploits in many instances, and when I hear the hunters say, "We have killed twenty foxes this season," or, "The hounds lost the fox this morning," I ask myself whether the sportsmen do not resemble those generals who appropriate all the glory of success while they cast the responsibility of defeat on their soldiers. Far from me, how-

ever, the idea of depreciating the duties of the whipper-in, which are certainly very useful, for without them the pack would be like a ship without a pilot. We may agree with Nimrod, however, in regretting that there are not as yet in England charitable societies to solace the old age of a class of men who have risked their lives a thousand times for the amusement of the wealthy, and who often find themselves unprovided for when the decline of years comes upon them.

Below the whippers-in, in the organization of the chase, comes the feeder, whose duties I explained when speaking about the Berkeley kennels. Lastly, as I returned with the sportsman from our walk across country, we met a man mounted on a small pony and followed by several terriers, who glided mysteriously through the copses and thickets.

"That man," my guide said to me, "is to-night the martyr of our to-morrow's pleasure; we call him the earth-stopper. His duties are most important; they consist, as the English term will explain to you, in stopping up the holes and earths in which the fox might take refuge when pursued by the hounds. This nocturnal personage is one of the most picturesque personages, and, so to speak, the wehr-wolf of fox-hunting. Without his humble services there would be no chase, for what master Reynard

knows best is the road to his earth, and when once there it is almost impossible to dislodge him. Poor earth-stopper! On the night preceding a hunt he has no bed to hope for, no matter whether it snows or blows. You will ask me, perhaps, why he selects the darkest and most gloomy hours to perform his labours. There is a very simple reason for this; that the fox goes out at night to seek its food. If then the earth-stopper did his work too early in the evening or too late in the morning, he would run a great risk of shutting up the hero of the festival at home. Just as you see him he is going to travel miles before his task is accomplished, and unhappily all winter nights do not resemble this one; there are many cold and severe ones, during which his limbs tremble like the last leaf that hangs from the tree. The stopper has learned beforehand from the master what coverts he intends to draw to-morrow, and at present that is enough for him; he knows perfectly well what he has to do. Look at him, armed with a pick and shovel, thrusting, in the moonlight, handsful of thorns, brambles, and stones into the entrance of the holes in which the fox might seek an asylum, and thus laugh at the dogs. Who will be taken in to-morrow morning? Master Reynard, who, seeing all means of retreat closed behind him, will be obliged to take to the open or remain in the woods, where he will have to run for his life.

If he had several domiciles in the vicinity he will find them all bolted, and he will be obliged against his will to take to the fields. After the hunt the earth-stopper will recommence another sort of labour, which consists in opening the holes and earths in such a way as to leave the fewest traces possible of his first night's work."

The sportsman, after making me acquainted with the fox-hunting staff, from the master down to the earth-stopper, called my attention to what he called the hero of the day. For a good hunt a good staff, good hounds, good horses, and a good fox are required. Those who have never practised fox-hunting are apt to imagine that all foxes are equal, but that is a great mistake. There are, in the first place, bag foxes, which come from the Continent, and which the English hold in no repute. These foreigners have neither the fire nor savage character of British foxes. Finding themselves, moreover, in an unknown place, knowing neither the strategic resources of the new country in which they see the light again on leaving the bag, nor the means of retreat, nor the limit of the woods and valleys, they only offer a miserable resistance to real hunters: the hounds themselves despise them. More than once, when one of these bag foxes was turned down, the best hounds in the pack have been known to refuse to take their usual place at the head of the corps; in fact such foxes run after the manner of hares, and

are only good, in default of others, to give blood to the hounds, as the foxhunters say; and the latter, again, when they have once tasted a wild, healthy British fox, will no longer stick their teeth into such carrion. It is to the intrusion of these foreign foxes into Great Britain that all the English hunters attribute the partial decline during the last few years of an exercise which is so intimately attached to the history and country habits of England. There are also foxes which are brought up by hand, but they are worth no more than the bag foxes, and though they may be forced to live in an earth they never reacquire the true character of their race.

The only animal which sportsmen, worthy of the name, care to hunt is the good old British fox, which has propagated, for ages, in spite of dogs, enclosures, railways, and the progress of the plough. Still the latter animal has been greatly injured, during the last thirty years, by living amid the temptations of Capua. The great number of preserves and parks, where game is reared for sporting purposes, has supplied it with too many glorious opportunities to satisfy its gluttonish appetites. Where can we find, in the present day, save perchance, in some wild districts of Scotland, that long, slim, hungry animal, so common in the last century—which ran like the wind from sunrise to sunset? By the side of this one, the modern fox is a marmot:

fat, short, and thick—it has all the airs of a London alderman who lives on haunches of venison and turtle soup. At least it is brave; and as it is at home here, it manages to defend itself much better than those that come from foreign parts.

The first thing for a hunter is to learn to know and esteem his enemy. The fox has been endowed with all sorts of vices, doubtless that men may have the right of killing it without any scruples of conscience. Consult the huntsman, however, and honest ones will all tell you that the fox is worth more than its reputation. It is very true that it does not scruple, opportunity aiding, to twist the neck of a fowl or a turkey even in the interior of our farms; but, after all, it steals to live, and many of those that condemn it without hearing it, would not act better probably, if they found themselves placed in the same circumstances. One of the qualities that recommend the fox to the esteem of hunters is the love it displays for its young. Hence, while freeing the country of a noxious animal, they have adopted the rule of acting honourably to it, and granting it all the honours of war. Sportsmen unworthy of wearing a hunting-coat, and who have killed, as a sort of brutal jest, young litters, or mutilated full-grown foxes, have been sent to Coventry throughout Great Britain by the brotherhood of hunters. Any sportsman who respects himself

would for no consideration in the world gallop by their side.

Generous fox-hunters do not hesitate to give the fox, when the laws and customs of the chase demand it, a chance of saving its life. Have they not already sufficient advantages over it? When the hounds start in pursuit they have an empty stomach; the fox, on the contrary, has been eating all night, and at times has eaten so well that it is unable to find its racing legs again. And then again, are not the hunters one hundred against one? I ask myself whether being killed by so many people is really being conquered. This is enough to show that the fox, in order to hold its own against man, is obliged to have recourse to many stratagems. The life of this animal is, moreover, only thoroughly known by hunters. Every huntsman who aspires to the perfection of his art, must thoroughly study the manners and natural history of Master Fox. I do not mean here the history which is learned in books, but that which is acquired by practice. The fox is doubtless born crafty; but may we not say that it also becomes so? A young cub will readily enter a trap laid for it; but it speedily gains experience, and if it escapes the danger once you will not catch it again easily. There are old foxes that foil the hounds for three or four years in succession, protected as they are by dense coverts and very artful tactics. I was

told of one of these crafty animals, which the hunters had christened among themselves the devil's fox, and which really seemed to have signed a compact with the evil spirit. It required the persevering efforts of an excellent pack to break the charm, and when the hounds at length succeeded in seizing the fox, it resembled a wolf, for it was so large, and had such a ferocious air.

One of the points of natural history which has most occupied hunters and savans, although the cause has not yet been discovered, is the scent of the fox conveyed in the direction of the wind. And yet it is on this obscure problem that the entire art of fox-hunting is based. This smell, well known to sporting dogs, seems besides to be relative to the age or nature of the individuals, and augments or diminishes according to the sensations of the animal pursued, such as fear, fury, or desperation. The most extraordinary thing is, that the fox seems to be conscious of this vestige which betrays its movements, and attracts all the pack after it. In critical moments it seeks and frequently finds means to render itself inodorous—that is to say, invisible, for in most cases the hounds only *see* the fox, if I may employ the expression, by the scent. To do this it only requires to cross a stream, and thus wash away, as sportsmen say, the strong odour which is fated to cause its ruin. The thrown-out hounds are then some time before recovering the

trail of their enemy, and pursue it for some minutes rather through sentiment than on any positive indications. It is easy to understand from this what importance the sportsmen attach to hunting with the wind: it is the first condition of success.

The sportsman's explanation had prepared me to take in the details of a fox hunt. We were present the next day at this picturesque scene, of which the English never grow weary. Unfortunately, success did not respond to our efforts. After a brilliant run, we lost the fox, which the hounds had forced out of its favourite quarters, and it was too late to look for a second. In spite of the annoying result of the day, my friend, who is a connoisseur, did not the less praise highly the way in which the hunt had been conducted. "There are among us," he said to me, "amateurs and professionals; the former seek the sport, the latter only care about killing. Modesty apart, I will range myself among the amateurs, and I say that undeserved defeats often do more honour to the pack and the hunters than certain victories due to accident."

My friend the sportsman did not intend to prolong his stay among the gay millionaires, as they are called in England, and prepared to take me to his county, where I should see, he added, fox-hunting as it is carried on among a rural population. I willingly accepted his invitation,

and we continued our journey. This county, whose name I cannot give for reasons which will be presently understood, is one of those most celebrated for fox-hunting, and immediately after our arrival we were enabled to witness an amusement which is repeated thrice a week at the place where we were.

CHAPTER III.

PRELIMINARIES FOR A HUNT—A MODEL SQUIRE—THE HOUNDS PUT INTO THE COVERT — TALLY HO!—FOX-HUNTING INCIDENTS—THE WHO-HOOP—THE HUNT SUPPER—CONTEMPT OF THE FOX-HUNTERS FOR DANGER.—HOW THE SPORT FORMS A HOME CAVALRY—THE PLEASURES INDIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE CHASE—OPINION OF THE DUKE ABOUT FOX HUNTING—INFLUENCE OF FOX-HUNTING ON SOCIETY—FAVOURITE CONVERSATION OF HUNTERS—SOME EPISODES RELATED BY THEM—FOX-HUNTING AND THE ENGLISH ARISTOCRACY.

THERE is no more interesting scene than a fox-hunting meet in the country; the warm shakes of the hand exchanged among the sportsmen, the neighing of the horses, the clacking of whips, the loud barking of the dogs, which testify their impatience, and seem perfectly to know what they have come to do,—all announce a holiday.

The meeting was fixed in the centre of the coverts which it was proposed to draw during the morning. At the moment when my friend and I arrived on the ground, we found a group of farmers and hunters assembled, among whom stood out prominently a pretty young Amazon, dressed in a rather extravagant costume, but

whose cheeks, animated by the fresh morning breeze and the attraction of a favourite amusement, glistened with the most vivid, but at the same time most delicate colours. The conversation turned, according to custom, on the weather, which promised to be favourable; there was neither a dense fog nor a high wind, those two great enemies of fox-hunting. Hence the sportsmen and farmers greeted each other with the thoroughly British exclamation of "Fine morning." Other hunters arrived every moment; it was curious to see them riding along the leafless hedges, or issuing suddenly from behind a copse in their red coats.

At last appeared the squire; he was a man of about sixty, but still hale, and whose manners, at once noble and affable, announced the pleasure himself felt at affording amusement to others. My friend the sportsman wished to introduce me to him. "He is an eccentric," he said to me, "but he likes foreigners and reads the *Revue des Deux Mondes*: he will give you a hearty reception." He, in fact, offered me his hand with that English frankness and cordiality which I prefer to all the ceremonies of politeness. After exchanging the usual greetings, and making a few of those jokes which only make the English laugh, the squire assumed the command of his army. At a sign and word addressed to the huntsman, the hounds, which had up to this time been checked by the

authority of the lash, were sent into the coverts. The scene, however, did not at all respond to the idea which one forms of a covered spot; it was a quantity of fallow ground scarce covered by a bed of dry withered grass, on which asses and geese had doubtless been turned out to graze; it is true that at certain distances there rose in the midst of the plain clumps of shrubs, impenetrable brambles, compact tufts of thistles, and, lastly, forests of thorny broom which grew to a certain height, though not sufficient to offer protection. It was among these shrubs that the fox was to be found. Hence the huntsman had given the signal to the hounds by shouting, "Hark in, hark in there, dogs!" exclamations which answer to our old hunting formula: *Harlou! harlou! ici, mes bellots!* They were thus urged to keep their ears open and search.

The covert at this moment presented an extraordinary spectacle. Every shrub and almost every leaf shook as if it were animated by a mysterious spirit. We might say with the English that the whole dark heath was alive. This illusion is produced, as may be guessed, by the work of the dogs, who have become almost invisible, but who make the dead branches crack, the leaves rustle, and the very blades of grass stir. From time to time, however, they showed themselves; and their white coat, marked with black spots, formed a contrast with the colour of the dry

stems and tawny shrubs. All the dogs were admirably patient, and glided into the narrowest passages; it is true that the huntsman encouraged them by signs, voice, and example. He called them all by their name, and addressed them in a language quite new to me; but which appeared perfectly familiar to them. A profound silence prevailed among the hunters.

All at once a bark, hoarse as that of a dreaming dog, broke out from the centre of the brambles. To this challenge other canine voices replied like so many echoes, and were followed by more distinct accents. This barking, the last especially, proclaimed that the fox was found. The point now was to compel it to leave its intrenchments: this was a matter of several minutes. "Tally ho! tally ho! gone away!" (*voi-le ci allé! s'en va, chiens, s'en va!**) the first whipper-in shouted, in a tone impossible to note; the huntsman blew his horn; the scattered dogs came together in a compact body, and all the hunters, digging in their spurs, started at a wild gallop. Here in fact the run began.

There were shouts, a medley, a whirlwind of men, horses and dogs, dashing along with a fury that produced a dizziness. The pack especially proved itself admirable through its impetuosity,

* The old French formula, which we quote, answers to the Tally-ho of the English. In the words *s'en va, chiens, s'en va*, subaudi the fox. It is he who is off, and the dogs are exhorted to follow him.

discipline, and courage. It was curious to see the laggard dogs regaining their place even under the horses' hoofs, and frequently at the risk of being crushed. Soon, however, order was established—a perfect order—in spite of the impetuosity of the run. This order was soon slightly relaxed by the advice of the Squire: but here another sort of difficulty presented itself. I had hoped that the fox would lead us across a fine plain which stretched out peacefully on our right. In its malice, it carefully avoided doing so, and led us, on the contrary, to irregular ground, intersected at every instant by hedges, ditches, and brambles, where it expected to reach the skirt of a wood. These obstacles were cleared at one bound by the dogs, several of which, however, rolled on the top of each other at the bottom of a ditch: they were up again directly, though, and dashed on. Their example was valiantly followed by the horses and riders, who leaped like squirrels over all the fences. Any one unaccustomed to this exercise had a chance of breaking his neck every moment. Fortunately, a few lads, induced by a chance of gain, opened the gates that divided the fields, in order to let the rear-guard of awkward riders pass. I at once ranged myself, I confess it, among the latter, for it was all I could do to keep my saddle on such ground, and while going at such a headlong pace. The horse my friend had lent me for the occasion was, to listen to him, as gentle as a

lamb: it may be so; but it had too much the nature of the sheep of Panurge, for, seeing the others leap, it constantly wished to leap too.

I had, it is true, before my eyes, to encourage me, the example of a fat farmer, who, in spite of his weight, appeared to fear nothing: he bounded on his saddle in a fearful manner at each leap his horse attempted; then, like a mountain upheaved by an earthquake, he invariably fell on his base. Though distanced by the vanguard of hunters, I followed the chase sufficiently close to notice the principal details. I saw the hounds run up a hill; their tongues, which floated in the breeze like red rags, announced at the same time fatigue, ardour, and a thirst for blood. All at once they stopped: the movement of their tails betrayed the anxiety of having lost the fox. The huntsman, after consulting the wind, slightly changed the direction of the pack, which brought it back toward me. At the moment when the men were leaping over the obstacles they had cleared just before, I distinctly saw in the distance one of the sportsmen fall from his horse while leaping a ditch; and as I did not see him get up again, there was reason to believe that he had received a serious injury. I told one of my neighbours of it, but he didn't seem to hear me. The fox-hunting men do not stop for such trifles.

As the ground on which we now found ourselves was a large level plain, I gave more liberty

to my horse, which started like an arrow, and rejoined the group of other horses, with which it seemed anxious to measure its strength. The country thus seen on the back of a galloping hunter assumes a singular aspect, with the large bare trees that pass before you like phantoms, the groups of gipsies calling to each other from the heights and pointing out the direction of the fox; then, every now and then, a landlord running to the side of the road with a radiant face, as if he hoped that the fox would be killed in his neighbourhood (which would cause a demand for his ale and spirits), or else that one of the hunters would break a rib in the adjacent ravine—after all, as well there as elsewhere. His hopes passed away with the cavalcade.

"Forward, forward!" I heard shouted close to my ear; "the fox will be lucky this time if he escapes, for the dogs have him. Courage, hounds, courage!" The pack, in fact, seemed to redouble its vigour and resolution; it might be said that it felt the destruction of its foe. The hunters on their side pressed the flanks of their steeds, whips clacked, the horses perspired and panted, leaving behind them in the fresh sharp air a cloud of smoke. Here the plain suddenly broke off, and I found myself facing a ruined wall, behind which was a sort of orchard. The whole band of hunters had disappeared; still I heard a great noise of voices and the rustling of branches,

whence I concluded that the horses had leaped in a twinkling over the ruined parts of the old wall. As I did not feel capable of such a feat I sought a by-road to reach the scene of action. When I arrived the fox had just been killed by the dogs, and the death-cry of who-whoop! was being raised on all sides.

The huntsman had dismounted; after cutting off the brush, which is kept as an ornament, he raised above his head the corpse of the animal, which he held in both hands by the pads. At the sight of this trophy, applause and shouts of joy broke out among the hunters; but it was very different with the dogs. Assembled in a circle round the huntsman, they made the air ring with the wildest barking. After balancing the fox, the huntsman hurled it among the dogs, who devoured it in an instant; every one wanted to have its share. The avidity which foxhounds display for the flesh of an animal which belongs to their family (*canis vulpes*) is a matter of surprise to naturalists. Perhaps they resemble certain cannibals who, without making man their ordinary food, find after battle a delicious taste in the flesh of their enemy—the taste of vengeance. The war was now terminated; the Squire dismissed the farmers and a part of the hunters with a gesture of paternal authority which seemed to say: "Everybody has done his duty."

A hunt resembles most of the new English

institutions, which begin with a meeting and end with a banquet. The Squire invited my friend and myself to dine at his manor. There is an old English proverb to the effect, "Hungry as a foxhound." I speedily perceived that the fox-hunters did not yield in appetite to the brave dogs, the companions of their pleasures. The pretty huntress clearly proved that she was not nourished on roses, although the colour of her cheeks seemed to indicate the fact. This love of the chase is shared by several other ladies in Great Britain. In Scotland there is a lady whom, owing to the serious nature of her studies and her friendship for the fox, the Scotch have surnamed Minerva in the drawing-room, and Diana among hunters. The guests chiefly talked of their exploits during the day; they also mentioned several falls, only one of which offered any serious symptoms. These accidents are so common that unless they are dangerous they rather excite laughter than pity. Caricature has illustrated them in England in every possible form. The hunters, on their side, have a sort of pride in breaking their bones with the most perfect indifference. One of them having rolled into a ditch, and seeing his horse pass over him with an empty saddle, shouted, "Did I not always say that Jemmy (that was the horse's name) would make a good leaper?" Another who, in falling, broke his leg, said to another sportsman

who asked how he was without dismounting, "Don't pay any attention to me; but if you come back this way tell me something about the fox, for I am afraid that the dogs have gone wrong."

Must not fox-hunting possess very extraordinary attractions for Englishmen, since the passion for that amusement disregards the severest lessons? At table a story was told of a sportsman who was confined to his bed with a fractured rib and injured arm. "How long," he asked the surgeon, before any other question, "will it be ere I can rejoin my friends and resume my place in the first flight?" "Don't think of that now, you require rest." "What would be said of me, doctor, if I were not present at the last meet of the season?" "And pray when may that be?" "In three weeks." "Well, I hope that in three weeks, my dear sir, you will be in a condition to break your neck," was the doctor's reply. Tragical events, in fact, are not rare in fox-hunting, and I could mention more than one English nobleman who has met with death in this amusement.

Where is the merit, my readers may ask, of a stoical courage expended for a frivolous and barren object? I will not hide the fact that this is to some extent my opinion; but foxhunters regard circumstances from another point of view. According to them it is not merely that fox-hunting preserves the race of chargers intact, this pe-

rilous exercise also develops the science of equitation, and forms the nucleus of an excellent cavalry. They invoke, in support of their opinions, the authority of the Duke of Wellington. The latter so admired fox-hunting as the training school of the English cavalry that he always preferred foxhunters as his aides-de-camp, and he frequently gave money to encourage this sort of sport. He was told one day of a pack which it was proposed to establish by subscription, and of the material difficulties which this enterprise encountered. "Well," he answered laconically, "collect as much as you can, and put down my name for the difference." This difference amounted to 600*l.* a year.

"Who does not remember," enthusiastic sportsmen also exclaim, "that furious cavalry charge at Balaklava, which excited the surprise of the French themselves? It was led by a brave foxhunter." From this an idea may be formed, they say, of what a regiment would be, composed of foxhunters; and doubtless on the day of danger one would be formed in every county in England if an army of invaders had to be resisted. The latter especially deserves attention since the origin of the volunteer movement, which announces in the British nation the firm resolution of relying in great measure on itself for the internal defence of the country.

At table I could also notice one of the attrac-

tions of fox-hunting which had not hitherto struck me; it is what the English call conviviality. In the country, owing to the lines of demarcation which the habits of society draw at every moment, the inhabitants might be well inclined to live alone and in retirement on their estates; hunting then intervenes as a cause for meeting, and frequently for lasting friendship. In more than one instance it effaces the distance between the gentleman and the nobleman. The science of hunting constitutes a species of free-masonry, the members of which readily assist one another. Every sportsman is a brother to other sportsmen. I could myself judge of the influence which the chase thus exercises over an entire phase of English manners, by the liberty, excellent relations, and cordial understanding that prevailed among the guests. The Squire was gay and affable. His wife, I was told, possessed considerable acquirements, but, like many English women, she employed, in concealing the fruit of her studies, the same care that women in other countries take to talk of what they do not know or are badly acquainted with. Had I not found at Olveston one of the clergyman's daughters who knew Greek and mathematics I should never have suspected it, had not the secret been betrayed by her father. In spite of this reserve the Squire's lady did not the less do the honours with a good grace that had no affectation about it.

The pleasures of society form certainly at least one half of the pleasures of the chase. Old sportsmen still speak with admiration of Oakley House, the residence of the late Duke of Bedford. Not only had this band of sportsmen—whose leader had taken the motto of *nulli secundus*—raised the art of hunting to a height which has never been surpassed; but the Marchioness of Tavistock, who lived at that period at the Hall, spread an inexpressible charm over the meetings which crown a hard day's fox-hunting. I was also told of Mr. Campbell, the laird of Saddell, who combines the rare qualities of a fine horseman, an excellent sportsman, and a remarkable poet and singer.

English sportsmen are sometimes eccentric, like all men possessed by a dominant mania; but after all, it is among them that characters are found. Those collected round the same table with me, though belonging to what the Meltonians call the rustic style, were not deficient either in wit or gaiety. Their conversation, which turned in great measure upon the death of the fox, abounded in Latin quotations, a habit which has been kept up—I do not know exactly why—among educated sportsmen. This death of the fox is an epic which commenced in the middle ages, but to which each day, as may be easily supposed, adds new episodes. The animal, when driven to extremities, has recourse to

the most unexpected stratagems, and frequently takes refuge in places where it is least looked for, in order to escape the hounds.

A fox recently sought a refuge in the cellar of a roadside inn, and was killed by candlelight by the eager pack; another asked mercy by slipping under the ample skirts of Lady Mary Stanhope, who was walking at the time in her park. The annals of sport celebrate before all, the cunning, readiness, and courage of the Scotch fox. The dogs were in pursuit of one of these animals, which, being hard pressed, found means to climb on to the roof of a house. From this elevated position it looked all around, as if reconnoitring the approach of the enemy. An old fox-hound found it in its retreat by escalading the walls of the cottage. The dog was about to seize Master Reynard, when the latter formed the desperate resolution of going down the chimney. The rest of the dogs, who had now followed their leader, looked one after the other down the smoky mouth of the volcano, but did not dare dash into it. In the meanwhile the fox fell like a ball of soot on the knees of an old woman, who was warming herself at the hearth, surrounded by her numerous children. Imagine the terror and surprise of this poor Scotch family at the sight of such an invader! When the hunters entered the house they found Reynard in possession of the kitchen, for mother and children had with-

drawn into a corner, where they stood motionless with fear.

In Dumfriesshire another fox was driven out of some almost inaccessible rocks, and closely pursued by the hounds. At first it ran at a great pace; but gradually its strength appeared exhausted, and the pack visibly gained on it. One of the hunters, who was galloping at the head of the cavalcade, saw the beast stop, deposit something on the ground, look round anxiously, and then resume its course. This circumstance aroused his curiosity. He galloped up to the thicket where he had seen the fox halt, and found a fox-cub, which the mother had carried between her teeth for two miles. In order to reward this trait of maternal affection, the M. F. H. at once had the hounds called off.

Fox-hunting, as we have seen, is attached to the character of the British aristocracy. My readers are at liberty to think that they might make a better use of their time; but it must not be forgotten that English society is entirely based on the principle of a division of services. Whenever in olden times the honour of the national flag was menaced, or it was necessary to vanquish on a field of battle, the country has turned its eyes to the nobility to find chiefs and direct the armies. This state of things has undergone various modifications in recent times, where the upper strata of the middle classes have infused

fresh blood in the corps of English officers. The British aristocracy does not the less remain the martial class *par excellence*. It is their duty to defend old Albion with the sword just as we call on the *bourgeoisie* to extend their influence and increase the wealth of the country by trade.

Now, Great Britain, in spite of her immense possessions, is not always at war; hence it was necessary to find a counterfeit of a battle-field which even in times of peace prevented the ardour and martial forces of the aristocracy from rusting in inactivity. This counterfeit is hunting, especially fox-hunting. Such an exercise responds at once to the character of the nobility and to the ideas of the rustic population, who like nothing so much as a squire capable of maintaining the masculine character of their country. It is the quality which they admire before all, and is often the only one they comprehend. Must we feel surprised, then, if fox-hunting, anathematized by the Puritans and Nonconformists as an exercise of Satan, is, on the contrary, encouraged by the High Church, and holds its ground in spite of everything throughout the United Kingdom? Action is necessary for the Anglo-Saxon race; and an amusement which heightens the masculine qualities, such as a spirit of adventure and a contempt of danger, defies all preaching, especially when it is based on the popular manners, on family traditions, and to a certain extent on the political organization of society.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT THE ENGLISH GAIN BY DEVELOPMENT OF STRENGTH—A GAME OF CRICKET IN THE SEA—THE DOWNS AND SANDWICH—GOODWIN SANDS—LORD'S CRICKET-GROUND AND KENNINGTON OVAL—ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE GAME—I ZINGARI—THE OPINION OF THE CLERGY—CRICKET AN ESSENTIALLY ENGLISH GAME—CRICKET AT OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE—LILLYWHITE—GEORGE PARR—PROFESSIONAL CRICKETERS—UMPIRES—THE ONE ARMS AND ONE LEGS—THE ELEVEN IN AUSTRALIA—HOW THIS EXPEDITION AFFECTS THE FUTURE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

In the struggles of the turf the English keep specially in sight the development of the horse: in fox-hunting they have proposed to improve the canine race. In a number of games and exercises no less worthy of attention, they principally care for the physical education of man. These bodily exercises are not only an amusement for the Anglo-Saxons, but a necessity of the race and the climate. Statistics proclaim the fact that in those towns and rural districts of Great Britain where gymnastic stimulants are more or less neglected, the local population tends to decrease and degenerate, while it is on the contrary increased

and developed in all those places where manly amusements are held in honour. This view is fully confirmed by history. Is it not to this necessity for action that we must attribute the fraternities of archers and all the sports of strength and skill, which have flourished from the most remote times on the soil of England, as if the inhabitants wished to defy by moral energy, and the violent use of the limbs, the deleterious influences of a damp sky? The educational system is entirely based on these conditions of the race and the country. At Eton, Westminster, Harrow, Rugby, Winchester, and all the great English schools, great efforts are made to place the mental functions in harmony with those of the body. The English have but a moderate esteem for those embryos of science or philosophy, in which the precocious development of the brain has to some extent caused the rest of the organization to become abortive. What they like in youth is a just equilibrium between the mental and physical exercises, and perhaps they would incline in favour of adolescents who display a species of fervour for what some have ventured to call muscular religion. Is it not an insult, they add, to the Creator, only to appreciate and cultivate one half of our nature?

A new method has even been introduced for some time past in certain public schools, to which the sons of the middle and working classes are

sent. The pupils only devote one half of the day to study; while the other half is exclusively given up to play and gymnastic exercises. If I may believe the very curious reports drawn up by the partizans of this system, the scholars who spend only a few hours in class advance more rapidly, and have a more active mind, than those who pore over their books the whole day. They also assume physical aptitudes—the advantages of which the English, who are above all strict economists, have tried to establish. They have calculated that the strength produced by this system of diversion was equivalent to a gain of one-fifth of the British population for labour. What a net profit, to quintuple the value of arms without augmenting the number of mouths! It has also been found, in shops and warehouses, that a clerk who was allowed some leisure hours for recreation and bodily exercises, displayed more moral energy, and did twice the work of another in the same time. Is this all? No; the English attribute the success of their statesmen, generals, and travellers, to the habit they have formed at a very early age in the Universities, of stiffening their will at the same time as their muscles, through the medium of athletic exercises. The ideal of British education is, therefore, to develope a strong mind in a robust body.

Frenchmen, however, must not expect to find in England the principles of a science which has

been spread among themselves during the last few years by Colonel Amoros. The English have gymnastic exercises of their own, consecrated from time immemorial by their manners, customs, and perhaps by the laws of their climate. Of all their sports, the most national is the noble game of cricket; and to this I will confine my attention: of all their athletic exercises, the most popular are racing and boxing—and we shall find them practised by a class of men whose life is, at the least, extremely eccentric. Large and very learned books have been composed about the sports of the Greeks and Romans; but a similar, and even more lively interest attaches to the amusements of modern nations, especially when these amusements reflect, as they do in England, the principal features of the national character.

Shortly after my arrival in England, about seven years ago, I proceeded to the south of Kent, in order to study the formation of the coast. From Sandwich, an old town entered by an old postern, I proceeded along the downs on foot. It is difficult to imagine a more monotonous walk, especially on a rainy day—and when does it not rain in these parts? As far as the sight could extend, I had nothing before and around me but sand. Here and there this sand was piled up in low, bare, and friable mounds, which rose high up to conceal from me any other spectacle but

that of the cloudy sky and the sterile crests, rising one above the other with an admirable disorder. I fancied for a moment that I was back again in Holland. Gradually, however, this curtain of sand became rent, and the sea appeared to me as studded with vessels as the night sky is spangled with stars. Some of these ships were idly lying at anchor, while others moved about, as if by accident, in a thousand directions: themselves alone knew whither they were bound.

About a mile before arriving at Deal, I noticed on my road an ancient and venerable fortress, built by Henry VIII., "at a time" (the annals of his reign record) "when divers Christian princes and potentates had formed a plan of invading England." Sandown Castle (such is the name of this old fort), displayed through the mist a heavy central tower, round which four bastions were grouped. On the sea side this circular mass of black and thick walls is defended by an advanced battery. By the arrangement of the terrace I was able to see that the castle of the Sand-downs was formerly protected against the sea by a moat. This moat has disappeared; and the sea now washes the worn stones of that part of the castle which looks towards the French coast. Such a state of neglect and decrepitude gave me a poor idea of the value which military engineers attach at the present day to the old works of the national defences. This sight, moreover, only enhanced

the character of desolation which the coast offered. At length I reached Deal, towards evening.

To my great surprise, I found the interior of the town rather animated; I say to my great surprise, for most of the English towns lining the Channel coast, inhabited by a population of fishermen or bold pilots, sleep the whole year, in the shadow of the nets, in a peace which is only troubled by the gusts and storms of the ocean. The next morning things were quite different. Hardly awake, I ran to my window, and from the inn where I was staying I perceived a band of musicians proceeding to the port, followed by a group of children and idlers. There was a species of buzzing of joy in the air. The port itself offered an unexpected sight; boats decorated with flags and ensigns were loaded with tents, baskets of provisions, and all the preparations for a holiday. I wished to know the cause of such an excitement, and the waiter informed me that a cricket match was going to be played. "But where?" I asked him. "On the famous Goodwin Sands," he replied with a certain emphasis.

While walking on the previous evening along the sea-shore, I had noticed, at irregular distances from the coast, strips of earth, or rather of gravel, which spread in yellow or gray lines in the direction of the channel. These sand banks vary considerably in length and width; at each change of tide they are more or less covered by the sea.

On land, and at the spot where I was, the flat strips to which the name of the Goodwin Sands has been given were at times suddenly hidden from my sight by the furiously upheaved waves. The origin of these sands, which greatly impede navigation, and on which many a tall vessel has been lost in bad weather, has been the subject of more than one commentary. Tradition tells us that they are the remains of an ancient island called Lomea, which belonged to Godwin, Earl of Kent, and which was destroyed by the sea in 1097. This historic legend has been greatly attacked by the *savans*, until a few years ago a great English geologist, Sir Charles Lyell, restored it to some value. Others, it is true, on the contrary, explain the formation of these banks by slow and successive accumulations of sand in shallow waters. Whatever be the cause which produced the Goodwin Sands, it was there—to some extent in the middle of the sea—that the Kentish men were going to play a game of cricket. Why on this day more than another? It was that day of the year when the difference between high and low tide being most felt, a greater portion of the sand banks would be uncovered during several hours. Need I say that the curiosity of the sight drew me, like so many others, into the small boats intended to convey sight-seers across a miniature channel called the Swatch? It was nearly eleven o'clock

when we reached Goodwin Sands, which were still damp with salt water. In a very short time tents and huts were put up, flags hoisted, and the wickets set up. The players divided into two camps. Eleven *versus* Eleven, dressed in white trowsers and flannel shirts of different colours, stationed themselves each at the post assigned him, in an arena to which the name of Cricket Field is given. My attention, however, was less attracted by the game than by the singularity of the scene. Players and spectators displayed a sort of pride in trampling on the strip of sand, which was covered nearly the whole year by the waves. This game of cricket was naturally a challenge hurled at the ocean.

The joy was extreme at this spot, witness of so many shipwrecks. Beer and spirits flowed in streams in the tents and booths. The dress of the ladies was elegant, and some of these naiads, though they did not wear the mythological costume, would not have been out of place at Neptune's court through their freshness and beauty. I know not whether it was the effect of the local colouring, but I fancied the wickets assumed the shape of a trident, and the bat that of a short oar. All at once the festival was interrupted by a signal from the sailors: we must be off, for the sea was about to reassume its empire, and we were at this spot what the English call intruders. "Make haste!" the boatmen shouted to us; "the

tide does not wait." In an instant the tents were struck, the booths levelled, the wickets pulled up, and we ran off to the boats. Nothing remained on this sand islet but the traces of a rustic rejoicing whose stage the sea was about to wash.

We had only just pushed off when we distinctly saw along the ground so recently occupied by the crowd a line of breakers whose white and furious yeasting announced the return of the tide. An hour more and these solid strips, which marked the mobile track of ocean, would be effaced one after the other by the tide. As I was returning to shore I was told the story of an English officer who on a cricket day fell asleep on the sand after copious libations, and had been forgotten at the moment of departure. He was saved almost miraculously by a dismasted vessel which at nightfall ran on to the bank, which was already invaded by the waves; the faint light burning on board this lost vessel fortunately attracted the attention of the Deal pilots.

It is rare, however, for cricketers to select as scenes of their exploits, eccentric spots like the Goodwin Sands. Most of the matches take place on firm ground, on a level plain, so many of which may be found in England, and covered with a short grass that glistens in the sun. How many times, when I have been engaged in a pedestrian tour, has the sound of the ball,

struck by the bat, announced to me at eventide that I was approaching a village. Ere long I would discover on a heath or a common a party of merry lads, who, let out of school, were employed in defending their wickets with the courage and ardour of a soldier in the breach. Still, it must not be supposed that cricket is merely a sport for children or scholars: on the contrary, it is the amusement of grown men. Artizans on Saturday afternoon shake off the cares and fatigues of the week by trying their skill against each other: rest with them is a change of occupations, and the cricket-field, enlivened by what the Oxford pundits call *pratorum vivæ voluptas*, is certainly a source of healthier and more honest recreation than the gin-palace. All professions, all classes of society, all ages supply champions for this truly national sport. In summer there is not a field round London which is not occupied by a circle of players, round whom is another circle of spectators, and by tents, in which the inside players rest and refresh. There are certain spots which specially attract connoisseurs. The two most famous in London are Lord's Cricket-Ground, in St. John's Wood, and Kennington Oval, where the Surrey Club meet.

Lord's was opened in 1815, at the moment when, peace being signed among the great European nations, the balls, as cricketers say, were about to take a more intelligent and inoffensive

direction than that of battle-fields. The entrance is not very striking: it is a sort of gateway attached to a public-house, and which leads through a coach-house to an immense green plain bordered by a gravel walk. The grass, thick, fine and short, is kept up with extreme care, and rolled so as to remove the slightest inequalities. On the left of the field is a detached pavilion, which serves at once as club for the members and a grand-stand from which to witness the matches. The other spectators, admitted for a small payment, are spread round the field, which is commanded in the distance by large detached villas. The cricketers naturally occupy the centre of the field, and it is to them that the entire attention of the crowd is directed.

'Simple though it is, Lord's Cricket-Ground has seen members of the aristocracy, bishops and generals, assemble on it: it has been the scenes of contests and exploits celebrated by all the journals of the day, and which are carefully preserved in the remembrance of connoisseurs. Book and pencil in hand, amateurs laid wagers, at that day, with as much science and boldness as the betters on horses in the Epsom ring. These bets on cricketers have even in their time occasioned some very reprehensible stratagems and tricks. One of the artifices consisted in removing one of the best players from his post by telling him without the slightest foundation, that his wife

had died suddenly. The man, disturbed in his batting duties by such unexpected news, exclaimed, "It is very unfortunate for me, and I regret her with my whole heart; but why on earth could she not wait till the match was over?"

During the fine summer days, you will generally find at Lord's a select company, among whom fashionable ladies willingly mingle. The latter sometimes form a very clever opinion about the incidents of the day; but they are accused of generally paying greater attention to the grace and elegance of the movements, than to the real science of the players. The ground is let for an afternoon to different parties of cricketers for the sum of one guinea, which, divided between two-and-twenty persons, does not constitute a very serious expense. It is true that most cricket-matches are followed by a supper, intended to regale the victors and console the vanquished.

The origin of so national a game has greatly occupied the learned men of Oxford and Cambridge—two universities which pique themselves on holding an honourable place in the cricket-field. The result of laborious research is that the game is old, and dates back to the 13th century at the least: but it did not bear the same name then. The one by which it is now known is derived from the Saxon word *creag* or *cricce*,

which means a stick bent at the end: now such was doubtless the primitive form of the bat formerly used to drive the ball. It seems, too, that this game was confined for a long time to the obscure classes of society. It was not regarded as an amusement worthy of a gentleman; and it is probably to the latter circumstance that we may attribute the silence observed on the subject by old English literature. Toward the last century honourable men undertook to remove it out of bad company, and ennoble it by giving it a more scientific form. The south and south-west English counties compete for the honour of this second creation. If I may believe good authorities, however, the cradle of cricket, as it is now played, was the small town of Farnham, in Surrey.

It has been wittily observed, that cricket being a pure Anglo-Saxon amusement, was to some extent inseparable from beer. Born amid the hop-gardens which flourish at Farnham, it soon spread into Kent and other counties, but still following the line of the hop cultivation, and attaching its progress to the English vine. Another and more certain remark is, that popular games are subject to the geological conformation of countries. Cricket established itself at once and with great facility in the plains, while it met with a resistance that still endures among the mountains. Kent and Surrey, during the

last century, stood at the head of all England, and the two armies of cricketers several times waged famous battles, whose circumstances have been noted down by writers of the day. This game has had its heroes, reformers, and martyrs. Frederick Prince of Wales, father of George III., is said to have died from the blow of a cricket-ball on the left side; and not so long ago the veterans of the old school proudly showed to the new generation what they called their honours—broken fingers and arms. These honours, at any rate (and they were pleased at the fact), must accompany them to the grave.

There has been no lack of patrons, either, for a game which so thoroughly flatters English self-esteem. More than once the hand of royalty did not disdain to exchange the sceptre for the bat. George IV. was a great admirer of the game, and himself founded, at Brighton, the Prince's Cricket-Ground. The aristocracy also considered it a duty to encourage cricketers: at Farnham, Lord George Kerr distributed bread and cheese and beer every evening to all persons who liked to practise on his ground. The annals of cricket are also connected with those of literature. Byron had a weakness for the game, which he calls in his verses a manly toil. In one of his letters he tells us that he was one of the Harrow eleven who, in 1805, challenged the Eton boys.

A new invention has greatly contributed during the last few years to the development of cricket throughout Great Britain. I mean railways; but possibly steam locomotion has removed some of the picturesque from the institution, by weakening the local spirit in town and country. It is assuredly an interesting sight to see two rival parishes advance against each other, with colours flying. If such challenges are still offered, they have lost much of their old pomp. At the present day, cricketers form into clubs. This organization had been commenced in the last century, when the famous Hambledon Club greatly contributed in spreading a lustre over a popular pastime.

Associations of cricketers now abound in the United Kingdom. Some of them even bear rather eccentric names, such as the All England Eleven (which is composed of eleven picked players), the Harlequins, the Orientals, the Vagabonds, and I Zingari. The latter, placed under the invocation of a saint whose name might be sought in vain in the Romish calendar, do not belong, as might be supposed, to the tribe of true gipsies; they are, on the contrary, gentlemen of birth and fortune, but who seem to have incarnated in themselves the wandering humour of the gipsies. They distinguish themselves from other players by ubiquity. Wherever they present themselves—and where do they not go?—

they are honourably received at country mansions. In 1861, they played a match against the two houses of Parliament. At Dublin, where they stopped a fortnight to pitch their tent, they were the guests of the Earl of Carlisle, and their presence gave rise in the city to a species of festival since called a cricket carnival.

I should never end, were I to mention all the other clubs. This tendency of the English to form groups through the attractions of certain pleasures, deserves our attention, however. In France, men like to meet for the sake of meeting; the Englishman is perhaps less sociable: he requires an object, a community of tastes, a peculiar tie, which draws him nearer his fellow-men. Does not this explain how a nation founded in great measure on the principle of self, maintains itself so firm, compact, and united, without calling on the individual to sacrifice any of his liberties? The voluntary association in groups and series, is the great counterpoise of British personality. It is doubtless from this point of view that the apologists of cricket call it a social game. It is certain that cricketers no longer regard themselves as lost in a crowd, but as members of a great family.

Must I confess the truth, however? This game, which exercises a species of fascination over the mind of the English, appeared to me cold and monotonous, the first time I witnessed a cricket-match. I one day made the remark to Colonel

Addison, a gentleman of remarkable ability, and he answered me, "In order to understand what there is in the game of cricket, a man must be English." All that was left to me, then, was to seek what there is in this amusement which responds so thoroughly to the national character. I believe I have found it. In addition to a quick eye, calculation, agility, and courage, this game requires a great self-control. It exercises the character and strength of mind, those truly British virtues; for the first quality of a good player is not to let himself be disturbed either by difficulties or success.* The English are never wearied of talking about the virtues of cricket. Among their eulogiums, there are some which are deserved, and to which I must subscribe. It is certain that this exercise marvellously develops the muscles, and thus contributes to the health and strength of the race.

Another advantage which no less pleases me is, that it serves as a connecting link between the different classes of British society. In English villages it is not rare to meet on the same cricket-ground the peer and the labourer, the vicar and the publican, the lawyer and the barber, who play, talk, and jest together with a sort of familiarity.

* One fact, perhaps, deserves mention; among the foreigners, and they are numerous, who have lived for years in England, many have thoroughly assimilated British manners; but not one of them to my knowledge, has attained a cricketing celebrity. This game marks, to some extent, the limit of practical naturalization.

Here each occupies the rank assigned to him by merit; and as cricket brings out a great diversity of physical talents, there is room enough for all. All the players are so equal behind the bat, that in county matches, not those in the best social position, but the best players are selected; and yet such an honour is the highest to which a cricketer's ambition can aspire. In this instance —and such cases are rare in England—we find Burns' lines literally carried out—

> "The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
> The man's the gowd, for a' that."

Do my readers now desire to know who are the great partizans of this game in the villages? They are principally the clergy, who assert they have discovered a moral medicine in cricket. According to them, this masculine and laborious exercise turns men away from intemperance. It is in reality the same with this amusement as with the old games so honoured by the Greeks: it demands before all, moderation and sobriety. Perhaps, this predilection of the ministers of the Anglican church for cricket is also derived from the education they received in their youth. In the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge it is not rare to find learned men, and even grave doctors of theology, who are at the same time formidable adversaries in the cricket-field. The game is, besides, almost the only one in which an English ecclesiastic can take part without deroga-

tion to his character. When the cricket philosophers (that is the name they give themselves) talk about humanizing and harmonizing the population by means of the bat, they involuntarily remind one of the dancing and music-masters in the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme." It is so easy to find all sorts of moral qualities in what we like! I do not the less readily admit that this game may exert a happy influence over certain men by turning them away from evil habits. As a means of diversion, it has been employed with considerable success in lunatic asylums.

Cricketers may be divided into two classes—amateurs and professionals. The latter are naturally the most skilful, for this game—I ought to say science—demands an hourly study and labour. Hence, in most of the important matches played on a grand scale, gentlemen are careful to call to their aid a certain number of auxiliaries selected from the professional players. The latter, when they attain a certain degree of celebrity, are never without engagements, and are even in grand demand with clubs and colleges. The most skilful was, some years ago, the famous Lillywhite, who received the surname of the Sanspareil. One of the great schools in the kingdom, Rugby, had been beaten for some time past in all the cricket-matches, when this professor was sent for to give the boys lessons. On his arrival he distributed the collegians about the field, chose the most skil-

ful, and set to work valiantly with them. At first they found the task a little rude; but Lillywhite showed himself inflexible, and resolved to form them at any cost. The consequence was, that the first time they met their old conquerors, they took a brilliant revenge. This example inflamed the zeal of other academies; and at the present day there is no first-class school without its professor of cricket. It is, in fact, one of the advantages of University life, all through Great Britain, that the young men not only exercise their intellect, but also acquire a real superiority in all manly exercises.

The nominations of the professors of cricket take place in the spring of each year, and are announced in the sporting papers, as the engagements of actors and actresses are in the theatrical journals. I say in the spring, because cricket demands a dry ground, and is consequently interrupted during the whole of the winter. The season extends from the appearance of the May fly up to pheasant shooting. The professional players are not only well paid, but their exploits are recorded in the columns of the "Times" and all the British papers. The different counties dispute the honour of having given them birth. They are heroes, artists, celebrities. They receive such surnames as the Invincible, the Hero of Kent, the Terrific. The enthusiasm of the English for the glories of cricket is explained by the nature of the game, which demands all the vigour

of the mind, as well as strength and agility. To hear them, the ball is bowled more with the head than the hand, and an excellent bowler must have good sense in his fingers' ends.

One of the most renowned players of the present day is George Parr, captain of the All England Eleven, who goes about from county to county playing, and thus inoculates the principles of the national game in the towns and villages. The provincial clubs are so flattered by the honour he does them in visiting them that they subscribe in his favour a sum of 70*l.*, give him a share of the gate-money, and treat him with royal hospitality. Need I add that it is often the same with the captains of the game as with great generals, who, through defeating others, at times end by teaching them the art of victory.

The game of cricket not only finds work for the professionals, it also employs a large number of hands, and creates a living for a class of men who can only be met with in England. I refer to the umpires, whose duty it is to see fair play and give their decision on disputed points. These umpires are real constitutional judges, bound by a code of written laws, and most frequently guided by the force of public opinion. Their verdict is always accepted. So wide-spread an exercise also gives rise to another branch of trade. There is no town round London in which you do not find several shops devoted to the

equipment of cricketers and the sale of articles employed in the game. The dress most generally adopted consists of a flannel jacket and trousers of the club colour, a straw hat or a light yellow, red, or blue cap, and stout shoes of white leather set with spikes. This simple dress produces a pleasing effect in summer. The professional players give the tone to the cricket-field; but most of those who figure in it are literary men, lawyers, artists, or gentlemen who only seek in it pleasure and a strengthening exercise.

English eccentricity has not been entirely excluded from so national a game. The ladies, not contented with applauding and encouraging the cricketers, have at times gone into the field themselves. At Bury a match was played between the matrons and unmarried girls of the parish, in the presence of their husbands, brothers, and sweethearts. The matrons gained the victory, and, doubtless carried away by their success, at once challenged all the petticoats in the county of Suffolk. Another interesting meeting is that of the Chelsea and Greenwich pensioners—army against navy. I was myself present at a match between two elevens of these brave fellows—the One Arms *v.* the One Legs. The victory was hotly disputed, but remained with the Greenwich pensioners. Trafalgar gained the day over Waterloo. In the order of the engagement, two or three legs were broken by the ball. My readers need

not feel alarmed, however; they were wooden legs.

The English do not alone cultivate cricket at home with all the heroism of patience, but have also tried to introduce it into the most remote countries. At the present day nearly all the barracks in Great Britain have their cricket-ground and club, and all her Majesty's cruisers are supplied with bats, ball and wickets. The result is that wherever they touch land soldiers and sailors get up a match on the beach, at the risk of troubling the repose of the turtles, frightening the aquatic birds, and astonishing the natives. I read nearly every week in the sporting papers the detailed narratives of cricket-matches which have taken place at the Cape of Good Hope, in India, China, at the end of the world. A tropical climate is not precisely the best adapted to such an exercise, but the English adhere to it in such cases owing to the association of ideas attaching to it. They play at cricket just as at the antipodes the colonists, separated from the mother country, celebrate Christmas in the middle of their summer with roast beef and plum pudding, in remembrance of Old England.

If we may credit the apologists of this national pastime, cricket is a means of civilization, and as such cannot be too widely spread over the world. I should be more inclined to say that it is the sign of British domination. Statesmen

themselves do not consider a colony thoroughly founded, that is to say, entirely subjected to the English element, so long as it does not possess a cricket-ground. All the North American peoples have kept up the passion for this characteristic game as a trace of their origin, and a link with the Anglo-Saxon race. Two years ago eleven English cricketers crossed the Atlantic, first proceeded to Canada, and then to the United States, challenging on their passage, like the knights of old, all the cricketers of the New World, and then returned home with flying colours. Of all these expeditions the most interesting and glorious is the one that started last year for Australia.

For some time past the powerful colony of New Holland had manifested a desire to try conclusions in the cricket-field with England. Several attempted arrangements had failed; when, in 1861, two rich inhabitants of Melbourne, Messrs. Spiers and Pond, took the affair in hand, and advanced 7000*l.* as a guarantee of their serious intentions. An agent, Mr. Mallam, was sent by them to London, where he put himself in communication with the cricketer's clubs. His conditions were liberal: he proposed to frank eleven English players willing to cross the sea, and give each of them the sum of 150*l.* There were certainly a few objections, especially as to the length of the passage—seventeen thousand miles of water to

cross! After all, this obstacle is not one of those which arrest an Englishman, and the affair was soon settled. Eleven players chosen from among the best in England volunteered.

This decision had scarce become publicly known, ere it aroused a unanimous enthusiasm through the country. The newspapers even gave it the proportions of a political event. This word may surprise the reader at first sight; but it must not be forgotten that Great Britain possesses in every sea a vast necklace of colonies which would rapidly fall to pieces if the thread of the communications and good relations with the mother-country were to be momentarily broken. The English, as practical men, do not therefore regard with indifference the slightest opportunities which may draw closer the ties between the home country and the youngest of its daughters, Australia. Now, what ground is better suited to cement the alliance than the cricket-field, on which all the sympathies of the same race, divided by the mighty expanse of water, meet? The Eleven were honoured by a farewell dinner given them by the Surrey Club, and on Oct. 18th, embarked at Liverpool with the assurance that all England would have its eyes on them. The repose of the voyage was painful to men accustomed to movement and bodily exercises. When the sea was not too rough, they played together on the deck of the steamer to pass the time and keep their

hands in. At length they arrived on Dec. 24th, 1861, in good condition, at Melbourne.

On its side the government of Victoria had not remained inactive: it had purchased an enormous field, on which forty cricket clubs practised daily. At the moment when the news spread of the speedy arrival of the English Eleven, the colony was plunged into consternation owing to the hapless fate which the last expedition sent to explore central Australia had met with in the heart of the desert. From week to week public attention became diverted from the disaster and was fixed on the international cricket-match. Subscriptions were everywhere set on foot to bring up to Melbourne the best players spread about the different districts. In the mean time the city had assumed a holiday air; and the eleven cricketers arrived from England had scarce set foot on the soil of the colony ere they were overwhelmed with honours. Never did statesmen receive a similar ovation. Their names and exploits were as well known at the antipodes as they could be in Great Britain. The muscular superiority of the Christian races was admired in them. The religion of our Saviour and strength had not the slightest connexion; but in the place of Christianity write civilization, and the idea will become just.

An immense cricket-ground had been kept fresh and green by means of a system of irriga-

tion, even in the hottest days of the year, which, in this country of paradoxes, occur in December and January. The turf was surrounded by galleries, in an amphitheatrical shape, and intended to hold from 5000 to 6000 people: more than 17,000 came, who paid five shillings for admission—and one half of these paid an additional half-crown for a seat. One of the Eleven, Mr. Stevenson, on his arrival in the colony had said, in reply to the speeches welcoming him and his colleagues, that, to recognize the generous and enthusiastic generosity of the colonists, he hoped to give them a good licking. As may be easily foreseen, the English players came out victorious from all the matches they played with the Australians, in the presence of an extraordinary concourse of spectators, especially women.

The voyage is said to have been an excellent affair for everybody: the undertakers of the bold attempt did not risk their capital in vain, and the colonists had the pleasure of seeing again the features of the mother-country represented by one of its most popular sports. On the other hand, the Eleven did not lose their time: they left Australia in the following March, and got back to England by the second week in May, in time for the opening of the cricketing campaign. Between two summers, they combated for the honour of old England, diffused the principles of an art which they consider intimately connected

with British nationality, and saw, at the other extremity of the world, a city which, emerging but yesterday from the midst of a desert, now contains a population of 160,000 inhabitants, and possesses institutions which, for the cultivation of the mind and the body, assure it advantages unknown to the largest states of Europe. These paladins of the bat will also have taught the rising generation that a gulf of 17,000 miles, agitated by winds and tempests, is no obstacle for an Englishman when he has to play a match at cricket.

Just as cricket is the favourite game of the English, golf, which has been christened the royal game, and curling, which is played on the ice, are the pastimes of the Scotch. Without discussing with the poets and novelists of the two countries the respective merits of these national sports, I may be permitted to change the scene. What most astonished Voltaire, when he landed the first time at Gravesend, was to find there a stadium and runners: he fancied himself "transported to the Olympian games." What would

CHAPTER V.

A TRIP TO CAMBRIDGE—THE PRINCE OF WALES AND A REDSKIN—A FOOT RACE—A FRAUD UNMASKED—THE STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF CIVILIZATION—ENGLISH WALKERS—A FEMALE PEDESTRIAN—RUNNING MEN—TRAINING OF PEDESTRIANS—MEANS OF GETTING RID OF FAT—CHARACTER AND TRICKS OF PEDESTRIANS—WHY THEY ARE NOT HELD IN ESTEEM—GATE-MONEY—SWIMMERS AND ROWERS—REGATTAS.

On Dec. 2nd, 1861, the Eastern Counties Railway left me at the entrance of Cambridge. The town is only announced at a distance by one or two steeples and the towers of King's College Chapel, which rise in the midst of fields of heart-breaking flatness. I walked respectfully towards this old city, the moral cradle of Newton, Bacon, Milton, and so many other great men. In spite of a few curious buildings and a rather handsome street, the interior of the town did not satisfy my expectations. The Cam itself, almost as celebrated as the Tiber, in the classical annals of England, is only a sluggish stream, dragging along its muddy, stagnant waters. However, it

was neither the town nor the university that attracted me this time to Cambridge: it was the desire of seeing a running-match under certain solemn conditions. The report had been spread that the Prince of Wales would be present.

I, therefore, proceeded at about two o'clock to Fenner's cricket-ground, which had been converted on this day into a running arena. The entrance was besieged by a crowd of students, through whom the Prince, elbowed, jostled, and unknown, forced his way as best he could, while laughing heartily. The interior was already occupied by five or six thousand spectators; among whom were noticeable the county gentry of Suffolk, the heads of the university, and a large number of the fair sex. For the latter a large covered stand had been erected. In the centre was a grass plat 440 yards in circumference, covered with a green verdure, such as can only be seen in England in the month of December. It was the scene of contention. The weather was fine but cold, and a wind as sharp as a sea breeze blew on the cheeks of the ladies, whose freshness, however, it only served to augment. Two races of an entirely local interest took place between amateurs, one for a purse, the other for a silver cup. The great event of the day was then to be decided. The professional runners appeared one after the other in the enclosure, and the one who most

attracted the attention of the multitude was Deerfoot.

Who is Deerfoot? A red-skin, descended from an Indian tribe, known in the New World by the name of Senecas, had landed a few months previously in England. On his arrival he had challenged in turn all the best runners of Great Britain. Conquered the first time by Mills, a celebrated English pedestrian, he had taken his revenge in several other trials, from which he had constantly emerged with the honours of triumph. At Dublin he had run a distance of twelve miles in sixty-five minutes five seconds. There was, moreover, a little tinge of poetry in the interest and curiosity attaching to the Indian: the spectators, especially the women, naturally regarded the *son of the prairie* by the light of Cooper's romances. His lofty, majestic stature, his form of a primitive beauty, his brown and coppered skin, and his fantastic costume, all added to the illusion. Deerfoot had been for some time past the lion, the event, the wonder of the running world. His portrait, or at least his photograph, had been printed on silk handkerchiefs already circulated in trade; he had excited in the heart of certain females what the English call love at first sight, and received more than one declaration on the part of the pale faces.

All around me I only heard curious details about his life. He had left in his wigwam three

children and a squaw, who was awaiting him with the majestic calmness of Penelope. He did not sleep in a bed, but lay at night on the planks in a wolf-skin. In America he had been converted to Christianity by the missionaries, and prayed fervently morning and night. Since his arrival in England he had gained a good deal of money; but he displayed extreme suspicion in matters of self-interest, and had for a long time carried about him all his heavy fortune in gold and silver, unwilling to exchange it for bank notes, which he considered valueless papers. It required all the authority of his Mentor, George Martin, an ex-pedestrian of Manchester, to decide him in placing his funds in the Bank of England, and the latter was obliged to promise that he would be responsible for the sum in the event of the bank failing. It was evidently this great reputation of Deerfoot's which had excited the curiosity of the Prince of Wales, and brought him to Fenner's recreation ground. Hence, so soon as the redskin showed himself on the running-ground, the Prince, who was seated in the ladies' stand, sent for him, and cordially shook his hand before everybody. It was three o'clock as the great race was about to begin.

Three English runners presented themselves to dispute the prize with Deerfoot: two at least of them were what the English call in condition, that is to say, with muscles hard as iron, and

eyes flashing with all the brilliancy of a rude health. A light silk jersey admirably displayed all the lines of their body, and each competitor wore a different colour—green, blue, or orange. Their dress, though forming a rather picturesque group, was utterly eclipsed by that of the Indian. He had round his head a narrow red fillet adorned with large beads, and in which an eagle's plume was planted, around his loins a belt of skin, on his feet mocassins, on his clothes small copper bells, of which he seemed as proud as a Spanish mule of its tinkling. These insignia were, it was said, the emblems of his tribe. On this day the race was to be six miles, which consisted in running twenty-four times round the enclosure.

The timekeeper solemnly took his seat near the winning-post: he is an important personage. With his eye fixed on one of those infallible chronometers which, were it required, would regulate the sun, he decides in how many minutes and seconds the ground has been cleared by the runners. The signal was given and the men started. What first struck me, was the difference of style between the English runners and the Indian. The first displayed, in skimming the ground, what is called here the poetry of action; with rapidity they combined ease and a species of grace: the redskin, on the contrary, with his back slightly bent, and rolling and balancing himself from right to left, ran with all the speed,

but at the same time with all the brutality, of a wild buffalo. The racing-ground presented at this time, with its different colours, an exciting spectacle; at one moment blue took the lead, then orange, then green, or else they ran altogether shoulder to shoulder, shadow against shadow, with the rigidity and lightness of a stone launched from a sling. The Indian at times found himself passed or even distanced, but then he rushed forward with head down, glided, bounded, and if at moments a portion of the spectators lost him out of sight, the noise of his bells was there to testify that he was pursuing his adversaries closely. His great height contrasted with that of one of the English runners, little Barker: he might have been called David against Goliath, except that in this case Goliath did not intend to let himself be conquered. In the last round, the interest was redoubled; only two serious competitors remained in the arena—Deerfoot and Brighton, a pedestrian of Norwich. Deerfoot came in first by about four yards. The success of the Indian was greeted by an immense shouting and a thoroughly British enthusiasm. The timekeeper declared that the race had lasted thirty-one minutes, fifty-four seconds, and three-quarters.

The Indian had scarce doffed his running-dress ere he was again summoned to the Prince of Wales. The prince, before leaving the ground,

presented Deerfoot with a purse containing two bank notes; distributed some sovereigns among the other runners, and once again squeezed the hand of the redskin, who responded to this honour by a rather clumsy bow. It was now the turn of the women, and they pressed round Deerfoot, congratulated him, gave him the most energetic signs of their admiration, and begged him to utter his terrible war-whoop. The Indian, cordially flattered, assumed an heroic attitude, and brought up from the bottom of his chest several savage notes which caused the English belles to recoil with terror, and then he withdrew, as fresh and as calm as if he had not set foot on the turf; he looked as if ready to go on running for a month.

Other honours awaited at Cambridge the representative of a race whom the Anglo-Saxons had for a long time pursued even beyond the lakes and forests. Deerfoot was invited to dinner, a few days after the race, in the great hall of Trinity College. This mark of distinction, I confess, caused the fellows to murmur; but one of the celebrities of Cambridge, the Rev. Mr. Beaumont, who had introduced the Indian to the table of the learned, defended and explained his motives in a public letter. According to him, every superiority, mental or corporeal, merits a certain degree of admiration. Some sad revelations made in a court of law have since greatly

lessened the interest attaching to Deerfoot. It was proved that the public had been more than once the dupes of arrangements made beforehand by the pedestrians. In spite of this evidence of fraud, the Indian nevertheless remains an intrepid runner, especially in long distances. His presence in England moreover suggests a physiological question that possesses a certain amount of interest. Is not running as well as most bodily exercises, one of the attributes of a savage state? We might believe so after reading Cooper's romances; it is now difficult to doubt it since Deerfoot's arrival in England. The latter, I am aware, is not a savage in the full meaning of the term; the tribe to which he belongs has been for some time past attached to agriculture and the rudiments of civilization. His real name is not Deerfoot but Louis Bennett. I will even add, though at the risk of slightly weakening the poetry of the *mise en scène* that the eagle's plume, girdle, and other insignia with which this son of the forests decorates himself in memory of his tribe, were purchased in London of a theatrical wardrobe-maker. With this exception, Deerfoot is not the less a very authentic scion of the Indian race of America; he bears in all his features the seal of his race, and those who, like myself, have seen him bathing in the sea, where he swims as well as a seal, will not doubt but that he has redskin blood in his veins. We might,

therefore, regard him, charlatanism apart, as the rival of the last of the Mohicans coming to hurl a haughty defiance at the runners of pale England.

We may now ask what motive has induced the English to keep up among them for centuries, with every sort of encouragement and curiosity, an art which, from a certain point of view, is a relapse towards barbarism? I believe after all that they are in the right. Is not the perfect man the one who participates in all the developments of civilization, without having lost on that account any of the advantages of the state of nature? What is not possible in one man is perhaps possible in a nation, thanks to the division of labour. The English have thought so; hence their efforts to preserve in the condition of a speciality certain gifts and physical talents, such as running, which were at the outset the lot and daily exercise of nearly all the individuals.

The superiority of Deerfoot in long distances would have nothing surprising about it, if we regarded it in reference to another fact. Whenever English race-horses have contended against Arab horses, they have always gained the victory in ordinary conditions, that is to say, in a race of two or three miles; but lengthen the distance and it will be a very different affair. A few years ago some English having taken with them some thorough-breds, found themselves in the province

of Hedj, a province of central Arabia; the idea occurred to them of offering a challenge to the Bedouins, whose thin and bony horses did not at first inspire them with any great esteem. The Bedouins accepted, and asked for how many days the race was to last; and the English, as may be easily supposed, objected. It was at length arranged that the heat should be reduced to three hours; this was a great deal too much for the English horses, who, after taking the lead at the start, were soon blown, exhausted, and dying, while the Arab horses reached the goal safe and sound. I do not wish here to make any insulting comparison, but all sportsmen agree that there is more than one point of resemblance between the pedestrian and the race-horse. It would result, therefore, from known facts, that civilization heightens in men and animals the impulsive force, but weakens in them the strength of resistance to fatigue, which the English call endurance.

Pedestrianism is, in the eyes of the English, a science which embraces two classes of exercise—walking and running. Walking-matches frequently take place in the country. Sometimes the contest is between several adversaries, at others a single man bets against time; that is to say, he undertakes to cover a certain distance in a determined number of hours. One of these intrepid walkers, who has left a name in the pedestrian world, was, some years ago, Captain

Barclay. It is still remembered in England that he walked a thousand miles in a thousand consecutive hours. He afterwards gave his secret to the public, and this most simple of secrets consisted in rising at an early hour, leading a steady and regular life, taking exercise daily, and practising frequent ablutions. About two years back another Englishman, of the name of Andrews, undertook to walk eighty-three miles on a road rendered difficult by steep hills. Starting at four o'clock in the morning, he reached his journey's end at half-past ten at night, to the great surprise of the inhabitants. He did not appear at all fatigued, and offered to walk sixty miles a day for six days if they would promise him a reasonable sum of money. The wager was accepted, and Andrews easily fulfilled the conditions of the programme. It is not only men who undertake this exercise. Last year the streets of Windsor were crowded with spectators who had flocked in from all the environs in order to witness the performance of a young woman who had promised to go and return from the town-hall to Salt Hill four times in four hours and a half. This made a distance of twenty miles to be covered within the limits of the time conceded. At four o'clock she made her appearance dressed in white muslin. This female pedestrian was about twenty years of age, and was very pretty, and admirably modelled. She started

with her arms up, her elbows level with her hips, and her head erect, thus conforming in her attitude to all the exigencies of the professional style; and we add that she accomplished her task in the time that was due, as the English say.

These matches are repeated in every possible form, and frequently for considerable amounts. Two gentlemen, the Honourable Mr. Fermor and Captain Lumley, recently contested in a walking-match for a bet of one hundred guineas. How can we feel surprised, after this, that the English are such excellent travellers, and that we meet with the trace of their footsteps on the snows of exercise, the sands of the desert, the burning or out of steppes, and even on the summit of the different mountains? It is equally easy to perHis bac he advantages of this locomotive force him, an pplied to labour and trade. I will only would e one example. There lived, a few years called near Gloucester, a young man employed in aga arge brickfield, and who, with a hod full of white clay on his back, walked, or rather ran, every day a distance of sixty miles. Is it not sad to think, that at the end of ten hours' motion, during which he transported upwards of twenty-four barrels of clay, this unconscious pedestrian received half-a-crown as his whole payment.

Running-matches have, during the last few years, been largely substituted for walking-

matches. The former exercise has been encouraged by several members of the English aristocracy. Near Epsom Sir Gilbert Heathcote gives annually on his estate of Durdens a pedestrian *fête*, to which he invites all his tenants, old and young, and himself determines the distance they have to run, after taking into consideration their success or defeats during previous years. These contests are also held in high repute at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, at Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and Shrewsbury schools, where exhibitions of athletic sports take place annually in the presence of strangers. The Protestant clergy, who to a great extent direct training establishments, regard such exercises as obliged ment of physical progress for the Anglo from race, and even as a means to morality. h meal opinion on this point has often reminded everage what M. Serres, the learned anatomist, all spime one day in France: "Running developed as lungs, and the latter hold in subjection the elity economy of the human body."

These exercises, esteemed as they are in England, would, however, very soon degenerate in the hands of amateurs, were they not sustained by what the English call a standard. This type is the professional runner, and these are at the present day extremely numerous throughout Great Britain. In turning over the sporting journals I counted no less than ninety pedestrian

matches in one week. There were matches for every condition of distance, and some of them also entailed the obligation of leaping over flights of hurdles. There are some celebrities among the pedestrians. What these men suffer, especially at the commencement, what privations of every description they endure, what monotonous and fatiguing trials they must go through—and all this at times merely to gain a ten-pound prize—no one but themselves could describe. Without a special course of instruction there are no runners properly so called. For those who might doubt the power of a method over bodily exercises, it will be sufficient to quote one fact out of a thousand. A runner had figured in different matches and had always been beaten. His backers had lost a great deal of money upon him, and gave him up. He did not know what would become of him, when a skilful trainer called on him, and offered to back him again against his old opponents, on condition that he would blindly submit to a course of training. The runner had been in training before, but it had been a bad system. The bargain, as may be easily supposed, was accepted. The poor man at first was compelled to give up his porter, a grand sacrifice for an Englishman: he had to sweat and lose flesh for weeks, and at length learned one day, to his great delight, that he was in condition, and was going to appear on the

running-ground once more. The result of the treatment was that he astonished and soon left his old victors far behind him. Of what nature are the principal elements of such a method? This it was that I wished to learn from the lips of the pedestrians themselves.

The first care of the trainer is to produce a reaction in the constitution of his *protégé* by a strict dietary. The system is severe, and the man taken in hand promises to submit to it with all the rigidity of an anchorite. He must, in the first place, break with all his old habits, and, as one of them said to me, "the most painful thing is not what we are obliged to do during the training course, but what we are obliged to let alone." The adept must abstain from smoking, renounce coffee, drink at each meal only half a pint of tea, that favourite beverage of the English, and deprive himself of all spirituous liquors. His meals are exactly fixed as regards time, as well as the number and quality of the dishes. All he eats, all he drinks, is measured, weighed, and analyzed with extreme vigilance. The staple of his food consists of roast beef, mutton chops, and oatmeal. The pupil has passed his word to undergo all these trials, and the slightest derogation of the rules of training would be a robbery committed on his backer. To this austere regimen is added the exercise, which also possesses a character of in-

flexibility. What the trainers most despise in a man is stoutness, which they regard as a luxury or superfluity, or, to speak more correctly, as a disease of civilization. A fat runner—and such are met with now and then in matches—is almost certain to experience a defeat, and draw down on himself the sneers of the public. In order to combat this inconvenience, recourse is had to sweating. These sweats are natural or artificial, general or local; according to the temperament of the subject. If it be only requisite to reduce some parts of the body too loaded with flesh, the pupil is ordered to run for several hours with those parts covered with a frightful amount of very warm clothing. When, on the other hand, the whole of the individual's body has to be reduced, he is enveloped in a wet sheet, he is rolled up like a mummy in a blanket, and then placed under a feather bed. Sometimes even sudorific potions or liquors are administered to the patient. So soon as he is considered to be fit, that is to say, thin and strong, the trainer usually takes him to a professional ground, or enclosure reserved for racing trials, to which the company are not admitted. Here the trainer, who must himself be a good runner, gives the example and excites the ardour of his pupil, while being careful not to discourage him by any appearance of overwhelming superiority. The critical period, if we may so express ourselves, is

that which immediately precedes the race. Excellent runners often lose their match through the anxiety which devours them day and night shortly before the race. It is the trainer's duty at such a time to invent means of diversion, and inspire the man who belongs to him with a great self-confidence.

Now to see what is the result of this preparation. A runner before and after training is not the same man. The marvels of such a transformation have been recognized by all physiological physicians, and I have myself seen extraordinary examples. The soft, flabby, puffy flesh assumes, under the action of the system, the hardness and firmness of marble; the muscles, hitherto sleeping beneath the fat, are developed with admirable vigour and dryness; all the limbs are reduced to correct proportions, and a smooth, fine, and close skin is stretched out over them. The result of the training is not only to increase the material faculties of the pupil, but also to protect him against the accidents which too often accompany in others excessive fatigue. Cold, wind, rain, and perspiration now pass imperceptibly over these limbs of iron. If we may believe the practical philosophers of Great Britain, all constitutions, and nearly all ages, may be modified by the same regime; every man would find in it a source of strength and health.

A very curious spectacle for me—as curious as the race itself—is to see the runners, on reaching the ground, throw off the brown rug that covers them like a cloak and display in the sun the muscles which professional training has made for them. Can we feel astonished after this at the somewhat brutal praise which the English lavish on these men? As the pedestrians are fond of bearing the names of animals, we might easily believe, on reading in the sporting journals the report of a match, that a menagerie was being described:—"The London Stag had not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon him; the American Deer was admirably proportioned, and his flesh was as hard as nails; the Antelope had never been in finer condition." All this is slightly bestial, I allow, and it seems at the first blush that man with our neighbours has been swallowed up in his physical functions. My readers can reassure themselves, however: this nation which admires in certain specialities the development of strength, has its Dickens, its Thackeray, its Bulwer, to whom it pays, on the other hand, the tribute of the homage due to the intellect. Once on a time, a certain religious school spoke a great deal in France about the rehabilitation of the form and the resurrection of the flesh: in England the human form, in so far as it expresses vigour and action, has no need of being rehabilitated, because it has always been honoured and carefully culti-

vated. Shall we say that this is materialism? To exercise and develope material strength is not to obey it.

The English esteem foot-racing as they indeed esteem all other gymnastics: they admire these men—"living marble" one of their poets calls them—in whom a peculiar art has in some measure carved the statue of energy and speed. Whence comes it then that they despise the life of pedestrians? This results, I am bound to say, from the morals of the profession. For a very long time past runners have been regarded in England as men with wide consciences, who have recourse to every means, not excepting fraud, to gain money. Several years ago, Lord's cricket-ground was at the same time a famous place for running-matches. One of the *habitués* of the ground, known by the name of old Fennex, one day brought from Hertfordshire a young man who, on reaching the ground, assumed the airs of a country clown with his pockets full of money. A match was made between him and a bad runner of the third class —a match which he won, though only by a neck. Then, as if intoxicated at his narrow victory, and striking his pockets full of sovereigns, he exclaimed, "I challenge anybody on the ground, I don't care who, to run me for five-and-twenty pounds!" A match was at once made, amid the reflections of the crowd: "It is a sin," some said, "to win the money of such a simpleton." "Nonsense!" others objected, "he is old enough to

know what he is about: all the worse for him." In the meanwhile old Fennex went about betting considerable sums on the young man. The match came off, and this time the pretended novice bounded over the ground like a greyhound. He was a running man of the first class. His victory was followed by an immense burst of laughter; but those who had lost (and they were numerous) laughed on the wrong side of their face.

At the present day pedestrians have other tricks at their service. If there were an earnest desire for reform, as people say every day in England, the first condition would be to abolish the custom which has sprung up during the last few years, of giving a portion of the gate-money to the pedestrians. As long as this custom endures, the spectators will, in the majority of instances, pay for being duped. The runners, in fact, care much less for their honour and reputation than for the profit which may accrue to them. Now, it is their interest, under the new system, to yield the prize, now and then, to a brother ped. whose victories, announced repeatedly in the papers, will attract company, and thus, coming in losers, they gain. This latter circumstance is a sufficient explanation why, while professional cricketers throughout Great Britain, and even to the extremities of the English world, are popular, respected, and esteemed men, professional runners, on the contrary, are generally despised, even by those who applaud them.

The English also cultivate many other gymnastic exercises. As they live on an island, it is not surprising that swimming should be a national art among them. A celebrated swimmer, Beckwith, who decorates himself with the title of champion, has a daughter seven years of age, Miss Jessie, and two other children, one four and the other three, who follow him in the water and under the water, like a school of dolphins. Another professor of swimming some time ago leaped off a height of twenty-four feet, fired two pistols during his aerial trip, and, when at the bottom of the water, quietly put on a pair of trousers just as if he had been in his dressing-room. The sea and the river also give rise to another sort of sport, which is much more fully developed: I mean boating. This is not the first time that England has been compared to a vessel: this vessel of earth, cast on the ocean by a series of geological revolutions, is represented to some extent by a multitude of yachts, barks, and skiffs handled by amateurs. When spring arrives, old Albion is annually reprocreated in the midst of the festival of the waters. One of the first contests which at that time excite curiosity is that of the Oxford against the Cambridge eight. The regattas also attract during the summer thousands of spectators to the seashore or river banks. If the ship is, according to the expression of an Englishmen, the steed of the waves, the fine slight boats which dispute

the prize of speed on the Thames must be the gazelles. It is marvellous to see how they run, leap, and bound over the surface of the dark river! Rowing and boating clubs have been for a long time organized throughout Great Britain, each possessing its own colours, traditions, annals, and celebrity. They exist for every class of society, for all the forms imaginable of yachts and boats intended to cleave the fresh or salt water. I will not dwell, however, on an amusement which is represented in France, though on a much more restricted scale. It will be sufficient for me to say that the habit of managing the oar, the sail, and the rudder, by creating a species of familiarity with the rivers and the sea, has necessarily developed among the English a spirit of adventure. Three Englishmen crossed the ocean two years ago, and proceeded to Holland in a small boat. On reaching Arnheim they put the boat on their shoulders and carried it to the hotel where they intended to spend the night. The next morning, to use their own expression, they carried their wooden horse on their backs down to the Rhine, and embarked there for Germany.

I have up to this point only mentioned the sports and exercises to which the English give the epithet of *legal*. There is another which has the law against it, but has in its favour the manners, customs, and warm sympathies of the nation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOXER AT HOME — HISTORY OF PUGILISM — JACKSON AND LORD BYRON — BOXING AT THE ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES — PHYSIOLOGY OF PUGILISTS — THEIR SLANG—ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE PUGILIST AND THE PUBLICAN — TRAINING OF THE YOUNG ATHLETE — PECULIAR TREATMENT HE MUST UNDERGO—CONDITIONS AND GROUND OF THE PRIZE-FIGHT —WHY THE AUTHORITIES INTERFERE TOO LATE—APPEARANCE OF THE RING—THE ROUNDS—JEM MACE AND HURST —TOM SAYERS AND HEENAN—WARD AND HIS PICTURES, OR THE PUGILIST ARTIST — LIFE AND BURIAL OF THE PUGILIST—OPINIONS IN FAVOUR OF THE RING—REACTION AGAINST PRIZE-FIGHTS, AND THE OPINION OF THE "TIMES" —HOW BODILY EXERCISES CONTRIBUTED TO THE GREATNESS AND STRENGTH OF THE BRITISH NATION.

THERE is in Shoreditch a public-house frequented by men of coarse features and extraordinary appearance. This house, which forms the corner of a street, is surrounded every evening by a group of more or less ragged idlers. These martyrs to curiosity remain there for hours, with fixed eye and outstretched neck, striving to take a furtive glance at the interior of the bar, each time that the door is opened. "That's he, there he is," I often heard echoing in my ears. No, it was his wife; but the reflection of a celebrity also deserves some attention, and the mistress of the public-house in Shoreditch is after all a bar-

beauty. These persons standing outside are naturally restrained by a serious consideration, and what consideration is more serious than an empty pocket? Those, on the contrary, who have the price of a pint of beer or a glass of gin, may push the door open, and, happy mortals, enter the tap-room or the parlour. In the tap-room they see magnificent trophies ranged on a shelf or suspended from the walls. They are cups, gold or silver vases delicately sculptured, and above all a famous belt which excites the envy and admiration of the visitors. This belt, which has been described by some English papers with all the care which Homer takes in speaking of the shield of Achilles, is covered with pugilistic emblems and scenes. In the parlour there is a gallery of portraits hanging from the walls and representing all the celebrated athletes. Round the latter and through a cloud of smoke you notice men whose faces are not particularly reassuring and who are talking mysteriously together. They are evidently apprentices in boxing, betting men who back indifferently men or race horses, low-class sportsmen, in a word members, more or less active, of the honourable fraternity. In the midst of them is enthroned at times a man of about thirty years of age, with a sunburnt face, features as harsh as the north-east wind, and a low and retreating forehead. It is Jem Mace. Who is Jem Mace? You must not ask this

question of Englishmen; but I fear that the celebrity of the hero is not yet spread in France, and that I am consequently bound to introduce him to my readers.

Jem Mace, like many others of the fraternity, combines the functions of publican and pugilist. He is at this moment the rising star of the ring. As present champion of England he succeeded the terrible Tom Sayers, who is still alive, and as a sign of his dignity he has the right to wear the magic belt which he gained by the sweat of his brow, and which is the pride, ambition, and aim of the athletic career. Jem Mace was born in Norfolk: if I may credit certain reports, which are fully confirmed by his features and the colour of his face, he lived for a long time with a tribe of gipsies, and visited with them the green fields and rough sea shore. Of whatever nature the cloud that covers his earlier years, it is certain that Mace only appeared in the ring a few years ago. Up to that time he contented himself with visiting fairs and races where, like so many other pugilists, he put on the boxing-gloves and gave the astonished provincials a performance of the noble art of self-defence. Doubtless encouraged by this, he at last figured in 1855 in a real fight, in which there were sturdy blows to give and take. Since then, his exploits have made a great sensation in the sporting world, and victories have succeeded victories. However, it was not

to learn the history of his prowess that I entered at my risk and peril this rather ill-famed tavern—a low house, as the English say; it was to see the pugilist at home, the lion in his den. Altogether, this lion appeared to me to be tolerably tamed; in his parlour Jem Mace is an ordinary publican, who induces his customers to drink, watches the details of his trade with the aid of his wife and daughter, and, to use a favourite expression of the English, likes to talk with sinners. Once or twice a week, however, this talking takes a more animated turn. On these evenings the landlord has, so the programme says, an interesting conversation with his best pupils; my reader will divine that it is a conversation with the fists. Although these rehearsals are inoffensive and the violence of the blows is deadened by padded gloves, you can form an idea from them of the nature of a serious fight in flesh and blood.

The English give a classical origin to the science of boxing. According to them, Homer alluded to boxing in the Iliad, as one of the games celebrated in honour of Patroclus. I will not dwell on the history of this exercise among the Greeks and Romans, nor even among the English in earlier times. The authentic annals of the ring, such as it is at the present day, do not go back beyond 1719. It is true that from that time up to the present the chroniclers of the art have carefully preserved the memory of the principal

battles, as well as the names, biography, and personal titles of the pugilists. The first who obtained the title of champion was a man of the name of Figg, who kept in Oxford Street an amphitheatre where boxing and single stick were practised. Since Figg, the title has been held by a series of well-known athletes who succeeded each other, among whom I will only mention the celebrated John Jackson, who was said to have been a page of George IV. The truth is that the king had a weakness for fighting-men. On his coronation, he engaged the services of eighteen of the most renowned boxers, under the orders of Jackson, to guard the avenues leading to Westminster Hall. This guard of honour, which counted among its members a negro known by the name of Richmond the Black, was attired in the costume of pages.

Jackson, surnamed Gentleman Jackson, because his manners were more distinguished than those of his fellow-pugilists, deserves our attention before all, because, if we may believe the English, he enkindled the genius of Byron. The truth is, that the poet called his old friend the master and pastor of the material order. Lord Byron excelled, as is well known, in all physical exercises; but from his earliest youth he was most attached to the ring, into which he entered body and soul. "At Harrow," he wrote in one of his letters, "I made, or rather fought my way very well. I

believe that I only lost one fight out of seven. My most memorable combats took place between me and Morgan, Rice, Rainsford and Lord Jocelyn: we were always after that the best friends in the world." In 1813, when on the eve of publishing the Bride of Abydos, he dined at the Boxers' club, where were present his friend Jackson, of course, and another whom he designates by the sobriquet of Tom ——, "a great man." Byron, generally so difficult in the matter of social relations, sought and cultivated the society of champions, even if they had been coal-heavers, as Tom was, before taking the cestus. "I like energy," he wrote at that time, "even animal energy; and I have great need both of mental and bodily strength."

The author of Childe Harold is not the only one, by a great number, among English poets and artists, who has displayed a great admiration for boxing, and who practised this national exercise. Sir Thomas Lawrence had a fight in Bristol fields with a young man who afterwards became the model of his Satan. The name of George Morland was also very closely attached to the fraternity of prize-fighting men. I myself know, at the present day, several highly distinguished authors who spend one or two hours a day in relaxing their mind by stiffening their arms, and giving and receiving, with all their strength, blows more or less deadened by the boxing-gloves.

Boxing is held in high honour at some schools and at the universities. If regarded from a hygienic point of view, and as a personal defence, this exercise, which the English have raised to the dignity of a science, is eminently irreproachable: but once that the strength is developed, who will mark the limit between defence and attack. The immorality of the ring consists, therefore, in the spectacle offered to the English population, of two men attacking each other without any grievance, with no other point of honour than that of obtaining the victory; with no other inducement but that of gain; and hitting out at the risk of smashing their adversary's nose, breaking his limbs, or even killing him on the spot. "It can't be helped," the heroes of the fist say simply; and indeed it is not their fault: if there is a culprit, it is the public that looks at, encourages, and applauds him.

It has been said of professional boxers, that they belong to the genus *homo* and species *pugilis!* The fact is, that they constitute a separate class in society. They may be easily recognized by family features. It is always the same low, narrow forehead, the same enormously developed occiput. If anything could prove the truth of the principles of Gall and Lavater, it would certainly be the English pugilist with his flattened nose, projecting ears, blubber lips, wide chest, bullet head and bull's neck firmly welded on his

shoulders. We find again in him, in a surprising degree, the type which the Greek artists gave to Hercules: he is descended in a direct line from the mythological hero whose name he is fond of appropriating; and if he no longer possesses a club, he has his fists, which are quite as good. It is not merely by his external features that the athlete is separated from other men, but also by his manners, language, and mode of life. The members of the brotherhood have a language, or rather a slang of their own, whose terms would be sought in vain in Dr. Johnson's dictionary. The blood is with them claret, the head a nut, the forehead a frontispiece; the nose is a conk, the hair is wool, the stomach the bread-basket, &c.

Outside the ring, the quarrels of boxers are very rare. I will mention the only one of those unfrequent cases, as I am assured, which has come to my knowledge. Tom Sayers and Jem Mace met in the bar-room of a Liverpool hotel, at a moment when motives of jealousy existed between them, and they began a vigorous explanation. Still, Sayers' anger evaporated very quickly in action, and he had scarce defeated his rival, ere he displayed all possible sympathy with him. At the present day, these two brave boxers travel together like Castor and Pollux, and are the best friends in the world.

Like all men who are physically and morally marked with a special stamp, the fighting-men

seek one another's society, and this isolation from the profane herd daily strengthens the character that distinguishes them. Many celebrated pugilists keep at the same time an hotel or public-house—an excellent speculation, because the presence at the bar of one of the suns of the Ring soon attracts all the second-rate stars, who like to bathe themselves at night in floods of ale and porter. When the pugilist has no other profession, he likes going to some parlour where he has his special seat, and where he spends a good part of the day, less for the sake of drinking (he is generally sober) than because he meets there a select company, that is to say, a party of professional brethren and friends. These men have most often a great opinion of themselves: no superiority, in fact, is proved more distinctly than that of physical force; hence their vanity is singularly flattered by certain sporting journals, which publish their portraits and compare them with the knights of olden time. If the pugilist has his faults, he also has his good points; and persons are generally agreed in praising his goodness of heart. Among the boxers there is a charitable fund known by the name of the "Pugilist's Charitable Association." Their benevolence is to a certain extent that of the bull-dog that fights at times for the good cause. A few years back, during the potato disease, the best pugilists in England proposed to give in behalf of

the poor starving Irish, a monster performance in which "every man would do his duty."

Is this marked type a product of art or of nature? Of both, I imagine. There are men who are born athletes; after exercising their arms for a while in some other trade, after having been bricklayers like Tom Sayers, or blacksmiths like Heenan (the American champion), they perceive one fine day that they are on the wrong track. At such a moment their eyes are turned to the ring. After trying their strength in single combat, they announce to the world that they have at length found their star. These are they, who, having more or less boxing blood in their veins, take up the profession from their childhood.

In the latter case, the novice generally engages himself as pot-boy to some veteran of the ring, who keeps a public, and who likes to see his laurels blooming again on the head of a pupil. Then the education of the future Hercules commences at an early hour. I am not alluding, my readers will understand, to a classical education, for which pugilists, as a rule, display a sovereign contempt. No, his course of instruction consists in talking slang fluently, brandishing dumb-bells, running a mile in five minutes, and above all, in enduring blows and buffets without giving the slightest sign of pain. It is his duty to understand that human flesh was made to be hammered with the

fist. One of the principles of the science is that the pupil must always display goodhumour; even if he were to die under punishment, he must do it with a smiling face. This smile is, I confess, somewhat forced at times, and bears considerable resemblance to a grimace; but what matter? the intention is there. As the apprentice advances in age, he forms a contrast to other youths through his vigour. His hair cut short, and as hard as a brush, his nose flattened and polished on the surface by the rude caresses of the boxing-glove, his strongly developed bones and muscles, his protuberant jaws, all announce what he will be some day. The novice is, however, still somewhat on the same footing as the workman who, impelled by a sudden call, abandons the trowel or the hammer for the boxing-gloves; still with equal strength, he possesses an undeniable advantage over them. After selecting a sobriquet, forming connexions in the pugilistic world, and finding a patron ready to back him for a stake, which at the outset does not exceed five or ten pounds, he places himself in the hands of a regular trainer.

The treatment of the pugilist differs very slightly from that of the pedestrian: with the latter the development of the upper part of the body is sacrificed to that of the lower; but it is not so with the pugilist. His arms and shoulders must naturally command attention and be established on a solid base. For both classes, how-

ever, it is always the same monotonous and regular life—daily exercise, a cenobitic fare, and the obligation of rising and going to bed with the sun. Every morning before breakfast the pugilist takes a bath, and is then rubbed from head to foot with rough towels, or even horsehair gloves. If he be thirsty between the meals he is only allowed to drink barley-water. At the end of about two months of such regimen, the authority which has not ceased to watch over all his actions, declares by the voice of the trainer that "he is as fair as a woman." He is, in truth, a noble victim to offer to fists which in a few days will turn black and blue this splendid flesh which is of the colour and firmness of marble. He is not only fair, but upright and vigorous as an oak; his muscles stand out surprisingly, and nothing can exceed his means of resisting fatigue. One of the effects of the training is, that while doubling the amount of strength, it hardens the body and clothes it with a species of invulnerability. A well-trained pugilist bleeds very little, even from the effect of certain blows which in others would produce an abundant hæmorrhage. We are at liberty not to envy the physical superiority of the athlete, especially from the price at which it is acquired; but in modern societies, where the action of the nervous system has assumed a predominance —which is sometimes unhealthy—over the organic economy, it is at least curious to find a

class of men who form a counterpoise, and re-establish, to some extent, the equilibrium by devoting all their efforts to the development of the muscles.

At length the great day of the prize-fight arrives. It has been announced for two or three weeks previously by the sporting journals, which, however, have been very careful to conceal the hour and the place. How these details are spread on the eve of the event through the whole town with the rapidity of the electric flash, how thousands of persons assemble at day-break the next morning on the battle-ground, without the police knowing anything of it, is a point which I have never been able to account for. The two adversaries, who are never let out of sight by the police, if we may credit certain reports, always find means to escape and proceed to the ground, where a numerous and sympathising public is expecting them. Any one who has been present at one of these fights will never have the idea of accusing the English government of weakness or carelessness in the matter. What can be done with the best will in the world, when the leaders of the aristocracy, generally members of the two Houses, men distinguished in all spheres, and sometimes even clergymen, cover the ring, so to speak, with the eyes of their influence and patronage? How could the hand of authority pierce through this rampart of impunity? The

pugilists, consequently, have no cause to be afraid of the police-court, as they are placed under the protection of the national enthusiasm.

Still, it is necessary to lose no time, and the first care of those who preside over the tourney is to choose a favourable spot: this done, the ring is at once prepared, which, contrary to the ideas which mathematicians inculcate as to the nature of a circle, is a square of verdure surrounded by stakes and ropes. Each of the pugilists displays himself to the crowd, accompanied by two friends or witnesses, one of whom carries a sponge or napkin, and is his second, and the other a bottle of water, whence his name of bottle-holder. The duties of these two squires will presently consist in sponging with a nurse's care the dripping limbs of the pugilist, and refreshing his mouth with water. The entrance into the ring is a solemn moment: before going into it himself, the pugilist throws in his hat, as if he only wished to pass the formidable enclosure in order to pick it up. When the pugilist has already shown his mettle, and is a favourite of the public, his entrance is saluted by a thunder of applause, which is repeated with more or less vehemence, a moment after, in favour of his adversary. If the two men are not acquainted, or have never met up to this moment, they look at each other from head to foot with strange glances, just like lions facing and scent-

ing one another on the skirt of a forest. At length the two opponents advance and shake hands warmly, as if to testify that no personal enmity animates them, and that they are only there to sustain the honour of a national pastime. At this shake of the hands, which is accompanied by an icy smile on both sides, the applause is redoubled outside the ring. The English give the pugilists the name of gladiators: this term is improper, for they have no other weapon but their knotted fists; but they are truly, like the ancient gladiators, the drudges of the public joy. Oh, old England, those who are about to fight salute thee!

The two champions now draw lots to know which place each will occupy in the ring. The latter circumstance is by no means unimportant; for at times a great disadvantage attaches to the one who has the wind, dust, or sun in his eyes. The umpires are then chosen; and all these formalities being fulfilled, the pugilists strip off their clothes to show themselves naked to the waist. This ceremony rarely fails to excite in the mass of spectators an enthusiastic movement, for the exercise and training have developed on the arms and shoulders of these men masses of muscle which, through their hardness and prominence, resemble bones covered by a thin skin. The spectators, who often pay as much as 10*s.* for their seat on the grass, now remain seated

about six feet from the ring, and form a circle round a circle—a sort of snake coiled up in several folds. A few minutes have elapsed between the moment when the pugilists shook hands and the one when they assume their position: a second later and the fight commences, man against man, arm against arm, fist again fist; they strike, parry, or receive blows with a violence which at the outset is more or less moderated by the presence of mind and great command which they have learned to exercise over themselves. The first round is generally devoted by the boxers to obtaining a knowledge of the system, strength, and resources of their antagonist. After a short rest, round succeeds round, and the blows echo on the firm flesh, like those of a hammer on an anvil.

I have only once been present at this revolting spectacle, and then much less through inclination than to learn English life under one of its most characteristic aspects. Still, I must confess that it is impossible to witness one of these fighting-matches without conceiving the excitement of the English and the enthusiasm that animates them in presence of the ring. Saint Augustine tells the story of a young Christian, who, forced to be present at a combat in the circus, obstinately kept his eyelids down up to the moment when a cry uttered by one of the gladiators made him raise them: he had seen—

he was lost; and he became from that moment one of the most impassioned followers of these bloodthirsty scenes. Well, the Ring exercises an almost similar fascination. I had by my side a young Englishman who might be seventeen years of age, fair and blue-eyed, and whom I had noticed prior to the fight owing to his air of great gentleness. Hardly did the blows begin to pour on the bleeding flesh ere his eyes assumed an expression of ferocious curiosity. As, however, he remarked my surprise, he said, "It is horrible to take an interest in such things; but it is stronger than myself—it is in the blood. My father was a great admirer of this description of sport."

So long as the fight lasts the fury of the betting increases; at such moments, indeed, the fluctuations of the betting market become stormy, according as the chances appear to turn in favour of one or the other adversary. This alliance between speculation and brutality has something impious about it. In this sort of tourney, it is generally brute strength that gains the victory; still, it cannot be gainsaid that there is a science, a method. The importance of the boxing art never was shown more strikingly than in the encounter between Jem Mace and Hurst—a dwarf against a giant. All those unacquainted with the resources of pugilistic strategy trembled at seeing this *ridiculus mus* exposed to the shock

of such a mountain of flesh, and yet it was the mountain that was overthrown. At the end of a few minutes, the giant was only a one-eyed Cyclops; and at the end of an hour he was a blind Samson. The admirable courage with which these men endure blows and support wounds without confessing themselves conquered, would certainly be worthy of a better cause. Who has forgotten the bravery of Tom Sayers, who, having had an arm broken by a blow almost at the beginning of the fight, did not the less hold out against Heenan for forty-one rounds, firm, undaunted, and with a smile on his lips, and then left the victory undecided. When one of the combatants, however, is entirely placed *hors de combat*, the umpires interpose, and declare the affair finished. It is at this moment, most frequently, that you see a party of police appear on the ground, who had been sent, as the official phrase runs, "to prevent the fight, but only arrived at the moment when it ended."

My readers will, perhaps, feel surprised that pugilism has furnished a career for some men. They must know, in the first place, that the victor, bruised, beaten, and disfigured, but the prouder the more punished he has been, receives the stake hazarded by his adversary. These stakes sometimes amount to 400*l.* or 500*l.* In addition to this, he has friends who back him on the ground, and he naturally reaps a

good share of the plunder. In the intervals—for these fights take place several months apart—he gives lessons in boxing at a very high figure. Still, it is easy to foresee that the career of the pugilist is of no long duration. A man, however powerful his constitution may be, does not resist such assaults for any lengthened period. After a few brilliant encounters, the pugilist generally retires from the Ring, happy if he take the famous belt with him! When he does not keep a public-house on his own account he readily places himself, like Tom Sayers, at the head of a circus or a menagerie. These men feel a respect for strength, and admire it in all natures, but before all in wild beasts, with whom, I am bound to say, some external features of resemblance may be found in them. There are exceptions, though, among them; and the one I have more especially in view will prove that the exclusive development of the muscles does not always obscure the intellect.

I was taken one evening by an English friend of mine to a rather ill-famed part of London, which bears the name of Whitechapel Road. Here we found a small public-house, which announced itself some distance off by a large lighted lantern, on which was legible the inscription, "The King's Arms," and lower down, "Jem Ward, ex-Champion of England." This was the very place we were looking for, and we went in.

At the bar we found a grey-haired man, whose face and tall stature revealed the ex-pugilist at the first glance, but whose light-blue eyes announced a pensive and almost dreamy character. Jem Ward had been one of the first pugilists of his day, and behind his bar may still be seen a belt that cost 1000 guineas, which he gained in a famous encounter, whose memory the annals of the ring have preserved. After exchanging a few words, we asked to see his pictures, for we knew that Ward was a painter. After retiring from the Ring in 1832, he began, when at the age of forty-six, grinding colours on a slate and wielding the pencil. His education did not at all prepare him for an artistic career. After passing through a rude childhood, he had borne sand on his back as ballast for vessels or coals. He turned to painting instinctively. A smile passed over the ex-pugilist's simple and honest face. It was evident that, like all artists, Ward was not at all desirous of hiding his talent under a bushel. After giving orders to light the gas, he led us by a narrow staircase into a room over the bar, where a dozen of his pictures were exposed to view in gilt frames. They were principally landscapes, sunsets, and sky effects. I was fortunately disappointed, for I expected to find daubs, and most assuredly Ward's manner is not common. You perceive the faults and qualities of a happily-gifted man, who has formed

himself. They are at once more and less than masterpieces. Ward also possesses a natural talent for music; he has a daughter of very pleasing manners, who figures honourably among the good pianistes of London.

The old age of the pugilist is generally exempt from infirmities. He is merely inclined with growing age to prove himself a *laudator temporis acti;* in his time, men were much more powerful. It has been remarked in England that he rarely attended church: must we conclude from this that he belongs to the race of Antæus, the enemy of the gods? The pugilist is nobody's enemy; but a religion which preaches gentleness, humility, the forgetting of insults, and which recommends him to offer his left cheek when he has received a buffet on the right, is not at all to his liking. Perhaps he fears that by presenting himself at a religious meeting, he may turn minds away from prayer and moral exercises, by attracting attention to the material strength, of which he is the living representative. However this may be, he is anxious at the close of life to rest in a Christian cemetery. I was present not so long ago at the funeral of a pugilist, and among the few words uttered over his tomb, I retained these: "He fought the battle of life fairly." It is not in the cemetery, though his friends generally erect a monument to him there, that we must seek the funeral orisons of the

pugilist. It is in the sporting papers where his life, career, and exploits are recounted with emphasis; as if England had lost one of her national glories in him.

Such as it is, the Ring counts zealous defenders in England: what bad cause has ever wanted advocates? I am, however, disposed to admit that there may be two sides to the question. The English reply to the French, who are indignant at these fisticuff challenges: "Well, have you not duelling?" Their conviction is that the system of pugilism, and the honours rendered to men who have exposed their persons in a singular combat, when naked limbs contend with naked limbs, saves the British population from the idea of having recourse to offensive weapons. This theory has found adherents even on the judges' bench. Lord Chief Justice Best, afterwards Baron Wynford, was of the opinion that boxing practised according to defined rules, was an excellent English institution. He went so far one day as to tell the grand jury of Wiltshire that it was a law of peace, from the fact that it discouraged, by the use of the natural weapons, the employment of cowardly and criminal means of attack, such as the dagger and the stiletto. Facts are not wanting to support this theory. One of the aristocratic patrons of the Ring, Sir Maurice Berkeley, is fond of describing a circumstance he witnessed, and which he cites as an

example of the noble feelings which habits of boxing develop in certain men. A British ship, the Blanche, was engaged with an enemy in the West Indies. Among the marines was an Englishman who had distinguished himself in the Ring. At the moment when the boarding took place, he found himself face to face with a man who had nothing in his hand to defend himself with. The ex-pugilist had just been wounded in the leg by a bullet; but at the sight of a disarmed man, a species of generosity natural to boxers was aroused in him; he threw away his cutlass and finished the battle with his fists.

The laws of the Ring, the partizans of the system also add, by prohibiting any blows below the waist, tearing the flesh with the nails, or seizing an adversary by the throat, impose limits on brutality, introduce a feeling of honour in personal encounters, and thus up to a certain point elevate the combats of man against man toward a regular type. It is an evil which prevents a greater one. It is not easy, especially in certain classes, to restrain the arm of a hot-blooded Englishman: hence it has been found more simple and practical to moderate by the rules of the art the explosion of the quarrelsome instincts. All these arguments doubtless deserve to be taken into serious consideration; but they appear to me to confound here two very distinct things—boxing and the Ring. I do not deny that it may be at

times advantageous to raise to the condition of a science, or even an institution, the feeling of self-defence; but does it follow from this that the sight of the horrible scenes which are acted, but too often in the ring, is a moral spectacle, and worthy of an advanced civilization like that of England? Already a party composed of serious and enlightened men is rising through the whole of Great Britain against this barbarous custom, which, whatever may be said to the contrary, is daily losing ground. At the head of this party, I am glad to find the authority of the "Times;" but, so long as this paper lends the support of its enormous publicity to the combats of gladiators, will it not revive among the English a custom which it strives to combat by its moral reflections?

A final objection will only detain me for a moment: some Englishmen seem persuaded that, in suppressing the public fêtes of the Ring, the national courage will be weakened. The pugilists are doubtless brave; but if they were to cease to exist to-morrow, the British fleet and army would not the less continue, I am convinced, to make themselves feared to the extremity of the world. "Military courage," General Cameron said to me, on this point, "is a different courage; it is a moral force that springs from the feeling of duty."

Without dwelling at any greater length on the inconveniences of the Ring, will it not be as well

to seek what may be the social utility of certain sports and athletic exercises? I will never believe, with your sporting writers, that throwing a ball, stretching one's legs in a race, or dealing a powerful blow with the fist, is the great business of life; but, after all, man is double; and I can very easily conceive that, while not letting out of sight the development of the mind, the English strive to heighten among themselves the natural mechanism of action. A great deal of harm has latterly been said about strength: but after all, it is the ruler of the world. The nations that have declaimed the loudest against it, and which have given themselves the pleasure of declaring it impotent, are often the first to be subjected by it at a given moment.

I grant, however, that there are different ways of comprehending strength. It may be placed in the springs and institutions of the State. Such has not been the intention of the English, for, in their eyes, imperial governments make weak nations. It is, on the contrary, in the individual that they have sought to develop the means of action and resistance. What have been the social results of such a system? It has given precious strength to trade and labour. It is by the aid of its living resources, and supported by its individual energies, created and developed by a sum-total of incessant exercise, that Great Britain has subdued the elements, peopled the deserts,

founded everywhere manufactures, and laid down 60,000 miles of telegraphic wire; while the whole of Europe united has up to the present only the moiety—30,000 miles. Increasing the physical power of the race, is enriching the country. When such conditions have been fulfilled, a nation is justified in excavating railways under London, and erecting to Trade a palace of brick, to which the universe is invited.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOLD MINES OF WICKLOW AND WALES—ORIGIN OF SIR HUGH MYDDELTON'S FORTUNE — WHAT ENGLAND GAINS BY SEPARATING SILVER FROM LEAD — STATE OF THE GOLD-MINES BEFORE 1848—DISCOVERY OF THE GOLD-FIELDS IN CALIFORNIA AND AUSTRALIA — THE WEST INDIA DOCKS — AN EMIGRANT VESSEL — MY START FOR NEW ZEALAND — THE MINES OF OTAGO — THE MINES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA — HISTORY OF THE GOLD DISCOVERY — CHARACTER OF THE GOLD SEEKERS—THEIR MARCH ACROSS THE DESERT—NATURAL HISTORY OF GOLD—WASHING—LABOUR AND MANNERS OF THE GOLD-DIGGERS.

THE desire of making a fortune—that stimulant which everywhere so greatly influences human activity—presents itself in England as a universal disposition, which imprints a most peculiar stamp on the national character. The Englishman not only seeks opulence for comfort, but also pursues it for the respect attaching to it. Every one in the United Kingdom aspires to riches, as the most certain method of heightening his social condition in the eyes of the world. Are not all the powerful bodies of the State, in fact, based on large personal means, or considerable salaries? In England, as elsewhere, there have certainly been, from time to time, moralists who

raised their voice against the abuse of riches; but it is a widely-spread maxim that their eloquence has never converted anybody; and several have even proved, when the opportunity offered, that, in spite of all their fine reasoning, they had not succeeded in convincing themselves. This want of acquiring, regarded by some as one of the dangers of British society, by others as the lever of intelligence and strength, has, in any case, exerted a great influence over the manners and enterprises of our neighbours.

How can we feel surprised after this, that the English have greedily sought in the bowels of the earth after gold and silver, the two precious metals which, to a certain extent, contain riches in a concentrated form? They at first looked for them at home. If we may believe the Commentaries of Cæsar, the metallic treasures of the country were partly the cause of the invasion of the British isles by the Romans. Everything, in fact, leads to the belief that gold and silver formerly existed in considerable abundance on the soil of England. The history of the old British mines is mixed up in rather a confused manner during the first period of the Middle Ages, with legends of the demon-tales of fairies, dwarfs, and giants, so greatly has the discovery of gold had the privilege, at all periods, of overheating the feeling of the marvellous. More precise documents tell us that, in the reigns of Edward I.

and Edward II., three or four hundred labourers were employed at Combemartin, in Devonshire, in the gold mines, whose production was sufficiently large to aid the Black Prince when he was waging war against France. Gold has been found, and is still found from time to time, in several other counties of the United Kingdom;* but of all these discoveries, the most memorable is the one that took place about 1796, in County Wicklow.

It was at the outset a secret, but like the secret of Midas, it was soon breathed by the reeds of the Irish marshes, and the whole rural population of the neighbourhood, neglecting the produce of the fields, ran up to collect this gold crop. The crowd remained in possession of the ground during six weeks, and collected a large quantity of virgin gold, but then the Government, to whom by English law all the metallic wealth of the soil and subsoil belongs, resolved to open regular works. An Act of Parliament decided that the enterprise should be conducted by three directors. At the outset the produce of the mine paid the expenses and even left a profit;† but the works

* In Cornwall the miners very often pick up pieces of gold combined with tin, which they collect in quills. Several specimens of this British gold may be seen in the Museum of Practical Geology.

† The quantity of gold collected by Government in Wicklow was about 944 ounces, representing a sum of 3,675*l*. One of the nuggets picked up in the valley weighed 22 ounces, and was regarded as one of the finest specimens of native gold ever found in Europe.

were suddenly suspended by the great rebellion of May 1798. When this movement was repressed, the works were resumed in 1801; trenches were opened in the solid rock to discover the veins which, according to the rules of science, must contain the mineral. All this labour was thrown away; the gold appeared to have entirely vanished.

At the present day a company has been formed to work the auriferous spots in Wales. Everything announces that this mountainous country formerly contained the much coveted metal, and the ancient Welsh songs, known by the name of triads, celebrated some of these provinces as possessing a heap of gold. A learned English geologist, Mr. Smith, has found in the quartz strata of Ogafau, near Pampant, in Caermarthenshire, traces of the labours undertaken by the Romans, and resembling those which are discovered in Transylvania. If gold formerly existed in a natural state in Wales, must we come to the conclusion that it still exists there? Certainly not. The auriferous veins, very different in this respect from other metallic veins, appear to be richer towards the surface of the rocks and to grow poorer the further they are followed into the interior of the earth. The result is that gold, some fragments of which detached from the mother rock, offer themselves as it were spontaneously to the first comer amid the debris of

mountains and in the dried-up beds of torrents, afterward becomes much more difficult, often impossible, to find.

Silver has also been found on several occasions in Great Britain. In 1296 Edward I. removed from Devonshire 704 lbs. weight of this metal, and up to the reign of George I. the Welsh mines furnished the primary matter for a certain quantity of silver pieces struck at the Mint. Towards the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, the mines of Aberystwith acquired a great celebrity. Sir Hugh Myddelton realized there, so it is said, a fine fortune, which he spent in leading the New River from Ware to London. On his death, a Mr. Bushell, secretary to Francis Bacon, purchased these mines of the widow, and made a considerable profit out of them. Having obtained from Charles I. the privilege of coining money, he put up forges at the spot, and clothed the king's army with a part of the silver which he extracted from his mines and coined himself. During the civil wars Bushell sacrificed his fortune, and placed himself at the head of a regiment of miners, which he had raised for the defence of the Royalist cause. Aberystwith Castle was attacked and taken by storm by the Parliamentary troops. From that day the Mint and the mines were abandoned.

At the present day silver is only found in the

British isles associated with lead. For a lengthened period a very large part of this silver was lost and neglected by the miners, owing to the difficulty that existed in separating it from the lead when it was present in small quantities. Recently, a celebrated chemist, Mr. Hugh Lee Pattinson, proposed a more certain and economical method of separating the two metals. This was, after every deduction was made, a saving of 60,000*l.* a year for England. My readers must understand that Great Britain extracts from its mines as much as 70,000 tons of lead annually, and that more than one half of it contains a certain proportion of silver. This discovery, known by the name of the Pattinson process, introduced a species of revolution into the mines, and was not without an influence on the public fortunes, as may be supposed.

In spite of a few peculiar instances, the English had only found up to this time an amount of gold and silver at home, quite insufficient for their wants. They were consequently compelled to obtain them from commerce, trade, and great colonial and maritime enterprises. Like most of the other European states, England has purchased, for a lengthened period, the metals intended to be converted into coin. What was the state of this market a few years back, and what is it now? About 1840, Great Britain annually received its supply of gold from South America, Africa, and

Russia. The produce of the American gold mines was at that period estimated at 30,700,000 dollars a-year. The most celebrated were those of Mexico, Chili, Buenos Ayres, Panama, and Peru. It has been calculated that in the latter the lives of 9,000,000 Indians were sacrificed in the space of three centuries. All the mines of the New World known at that time were moreover in a state of decadence, and the same may be said of the African. Perhaps there existed in the interior of the African continent natural treasures which the hand of man had not yet been able to reach. A learned traveller, Sir James Campbell, having stopped for a time at Zante, one of the delicious Ionian isles, noticed a small variety of Barbary pigeons which at a certain period of summer, arrive in swarms from the coasts of Africa. Some of these birds having been shot, he noticed that their claws were filled with a glistening sand. He collected this powder on a sheet of paper, and, after carefully analyzing it, discovered that it contained a considerable portion of gold. The field was thus open to conjecture. The most probable thing is that these winged emigrants, upon setting out, settle down to drink on the banks of a stream whose sand is impregnated with metallic dust. But where are these fortunate banks? This is what the pigeon messengers have not been able to tell, and travellers have not yet discovered. In the

meanwhile, the richest mines were those of Siberia, and the Ural mountains. The auriferous land extending along this imposing chain appear to have been worked in olden times by the Scythians. In 1842, the general yield of the works was estimated by the English at 2,000,000*l.* a-year. It has since risen, according to Sir Roderick Murchison, to nearly 3,000,000*l.* In spite of these various sources of supply, gold—more abundant in England than in the other states of Europe—was relatively very rare, and more than once the British press was the organ of very serious apprehensions about the deficiency of the precious metal *par excellence.*

Such was the state of things when at the moment when it was least expected, the world learned that gold fields had been discovered one after the other in California, Australia, New Zealand, Nova Scotia, and British Columbia. The news of the treasures found in California produced in 1848 an immense sensation in all classes of English society. In less than six months, five thousand persons, belonging principally to the Anglo-Saxon race, proceeded to the gold fields. How much more marvellous was the enthusiasm which burst forth in 1851 through the whole of Great Britain at the surprising narrative of the auriferous riches of Australia. England then was about to have a California of her own, gold fields protected by her flag. She

who had hitherto received the precious metal from foreign countries, was now going to send her own into the markets of Europe. The discovery this time was, moreover, thoroughly English; it had emanated from the scientific societies of London. So far back as 1844, the celebrated geologist, Sir Roderick Murchison, after examining specimens of rocks collected by his friend Count Strzelecki, on the eastern chain of the Australian mountains, exclaimed as he placed his finger on the map: "Seek here—there is gold."

This prediction of science was repeated by the Australian journals, and in 1849 a certain Mr. Smith presented himself at Sydney with a lump of native gold before the members of the Colonial Government. He proposed to indicate the spot where he had found this specimen, and where there was plenty of the precious metal to be discovered if they would give him a large sum of money. The Government refused. Nothing proved, after all, that this specimen did not come from the Californian mines, and the authorities of Sydney did not wish to encourage without a motive what the English call a gold-fever. Mr. Smith was therefore invited first to point out the gold-field which he wished to sell, and to trust for the rest to the liberality of the Government.

Mr. Smith retired, taking with him a secret, which, however, soon began to spread. Another less interested colonist, Mr. Hargraves, who had

gained a knowledge of mining in California, had, in 1851, all the honours of the discovery, and as he made no stipulations, received the Government reward. Since 1852 Australia has sent to Great Britain a mass of gold which may be estimated at ten millions a year.

Mr. Robert Hunt, record-keeper of the Museum of Practical Geology, has called attention, in his "History and Statistics of Gold," to the fact that great discoveries of gold have always coincided with great historic epochs. By virtue of a law which we might be tempted to rate providential, they have happened at the right moment to offer fresh resources to the progress of the human race. In our time they are connected with the marvellous development of trade and the useful arts.

The natural consequence of these discoveries has been an affluence of the noble metal, as the English call it, in the London market. In 1858 alone Great Britain received in gold and silver a sum exceeding thirty-seven millions sterling. It is easy to imagine the impulse which this metallic wealth must have given to the commerce of the metropolis and the growing prosperity of the colonies. The population of Victoria, which, in 1836, was 177, counts at the present day 540,322 souls. Have not the recent gold discoveries also exercised an influence on English life by reviving what is called the genius of emigration, and developing in London old trades

connected with working the precious metals? There is here an entire series of facts very worthy of earnest attention.

In France we have, as regards the monetary system, two standards of value, gold and silver; the English have only one, gold, hence we must chiefly attach ourselves to the latter metal. Gold presents itself to us under three successive forms. On leaving the mine it is powder, or what the English call a nugget; at a later date it is converted into an ingot; lastly, it becomes coin, after having received the legal stamp. To each of these different states of the metal are attached special trades and separate groups of workmen. In the docks we shall find some representatives of that bold family of emigrants or gold-hunters, who go to try their fortune beyond the seas; at the melters and refiners we shall see the native gold change into ingots; and lastly, at the Mint, we shall be able to form an idea of the manner in which gold coins or sovereigns are struck.

There is no more interesting place to study manners than the London Docks. During later years I have gone there as a spectator each time that a fresh outburst of the gold fever impelled swarms of emigrants to distant colonies. At the time when the wind of popular favour had set in for the mines of Otago (New Zealand), that is to say, in 1861, I was walking one day along the magnificent basins of the West India Docks,

which border on Limehouse and Blackwall, quite close to the left bank of the Thames. Blackwall, formerly a village, and now an eccentric quarter of London, is occupied by shops and trades more or less connected with navigation. The West India Docks, the first stone of which was laid in 1800, and which were opened for vessels in 1802, consist of a canal three quarters of a mile in length, contained within an enclosing wall. On this canal, amid a compact mass of vessels at rest, I discovered an emigrant ship on the point of starting for New Zealand.

This vessel, although a substantial three-master, through its modest appearance, formed a contrast with the superb airs of the other ships lying in the docks, and in which a mahogany saloon with all the delicacies of luxury might be found. The captain, seeing that I was observing with great attention the various details of the departure, kindly invited me to come on board. There the spectacle was affecting and solemn. I had before my eyes all the miseries of society, heightened by the heroic feeling which is attached to a supreme resolution like that of quitting the mother-country. It is a great error to believe that young colonies only attract, as has been said too frequently, the most vigorous children of the old world. There are doubtless among the emigrants powerful and handsome men, but at the same time faces rendered pallid by hunger, and

heart-worn, exhausted and overcome by privation and bitter suffering. The vessel about to start this day offered a very melancholy idea of the strength which England sends to the antipodes. The first person I came across on deck was a thin young woman who was giving the breast to a month-old baby, but her breast had no milk, and the babe looked as exhausted as the mother. At the first glance it seemed as if there were no men on board: they were occupied at the moment in opening chests and arranging their heavy baggage. To make up for this, women and children were visible in great numbers: the former were nearly all bare-headed, and wore their back hair in a net. This circumstance would not be worthy attention elsewhere, but in England, where wives and young girls always wear a bonnet in the open air, it was evident that these new comers already regarded themselves as at home on board the ship.

There were passengers from all the islands of Great Britain, and of all ages. A mother with six children, whose heads rose one above the other like the reeds of a pandean pipe, intended on arriving to join her husband, who was a miner on the new gold fields at Otago, and was, according to her statement, making a good haul. Each readily told her story in a few words. An Irish girl, who had had the misfortune to be seduced, and who held a child on her knees, was

doubtless going to seek a father for it in New Zealand. Another had been married a few days before to an Irishman much older than herself, and had her arm carelessly round his neck, while her sister, badly dressed, neglected, with black hands and face, laughed at every moment and at every thing, with very white teeth. When I told her that she would doubtless find a husband out there, she replied, "I hope so too; that is the reason why I am going," They both belonged to a family of poor farmers, whose crops had been destroyed by a blight. A young couple attracted the attention of the passengers themselves: they were a Scotch man and Scotch woman who had been married on the previous day; the latter had run away from her parents, and the only luggage she had brought on board the vessel was her wedding gown. Scotland was also represented by an old white-haired shepherd and his wife, who called herself forty-nine, but appeared to be honestly sixty—"I have gone through so many trials," she added.

Though we were in October, most of the girls wore light, low-necked dresses: it seemed as if they already believed themselves in a hot country. There was in their dress a mixture of coquetry and indigence which pierced the heart; their thin shoes were more or less worn through, and misery could be seen through the holes in the shawls in which some of them had proudly

folded themselves. However, there was not a tear, a murmur, or a complaint; all these emigrants affected, on the contrary, a calm and ironical air at the moment of departure. There was, perhaps, some sorrow beneath this indifference; but each had a manner of concealing her regrets or anxieties. The character of the different provinces of the United Kingdom was also reflected in the countenances of the individuals. The Irishman, for instance, was not satisfied with being impassive and serious like the Scotchman, but provoked laughter around him by every variety of tricks and buffoon grimaces.

After inspecting the deck I went below to the cabins. Here the faces were more gloomy: it seemed as if all those who had a weight on their hearts had retired to this obscure spot in order to conceal their melancholy from view. There was, among others, a young man who, seated on a barrel before a table, was playing on a concertina a melancholy and familiar air, Byron's "Farewell to Old England." Some careful managers were already occupied in washing the small stock of linen they brought with them, while during this time the husbands were obliged to nurse the babes in their arms. The cabins were only divided into two classes (there are four at least on board large emigrant ships), and the lowest was far from furnishing an idea of comfort. Air, light, and space were dis-

pensed there with afflicting parsimony: the berths were arrayed as many as eight above one another, and were so narrow that only two persons could dress or undress there at the same time. The vessel would be at least three months at sea, and we can form a painful idea of what life must be in these floating prisons. Such, however, is the impunity of the human heart, that the slightest grotesque circumstances easily form a diversion to the most melancholy thoughts. An amusing scene suddenly attracted a considerable number of passengers on deck: it was a number of young porkers being brought aboard, which the sailors handed from one to the other amid a concert of shrill squeaks, for the animals, terrified, and not at all accustomed to be carried in arms like infants, energetically expressed their distress, which aroused shouts of laughter.

It was by this time five in the evening, and the emigrants watched the red and insensible sunset for the last time for them in England. The vessel slowly moved down the canal through a forest of motionless masts. I intended to land at the dock gates, but the water was too low for the vessel to approach the quay without grounding and I was constrained to remain on board. I was beginning to believe myself decidedly bound for New Zealand, which greatly amused the passengers. We entered the Thames and

went down the river, towed by a tug. My travelling-companions (for I was beginning to regard them as such) mostly withdrew to the cabins, where they made their arrangements for passing the night. Others, on the contrary, despite the cold breeze and darkness, obstinately remained on deck, with their eyes fixed on the dim banks of the river, which they would never see again. I took advantage of the species of familiarity which springs up at once on board such vessels, to interrogate the emigrants about their plans, and I obtained from most of them nearly the same answer. "Why are you leaving your country?" "There is no room for us in old England." "What do you intend doing in New Zealand?" "What we can." "Do you take a capital with you?" "Yes; our courage and our arms." A small number of them boasted of being free, which was as much as to say that the others were not so. By free is meant those who have paid the whole of their passage-money, while many, having paid but a small portion of it, must work on arriving till they have paid off the remainder. The latter find themselves in a species of serfdom, in the sense that they are bound to declare their place of residence, which they cannot leave without informing the company. It very frequently happens, so I was told on board, that when the vessel is well out at sea a face not before perceived will emerge from a pile of cable

or some other hiding-place. It is most usually a young man, though now and then a girl, who has invented this stratagem through the want of money to emigrate. It is then too late to think of getting rid of the intruder; they are obliged to keep and feed him while making him work to pay his passage.

Among the emigrants I especially noticed a party of gold-seekers who were proceeding to the Otago mines. These at least had an object and a destination. They could be easily recognized by their tall forms. Several of them were navvies, who carried their country with them on the point of their picks, for the Englishman is at home wherever he finds work. To those who asked them "What will you do if you do not find gold?" they answered proudly, "Is there not the ground?" Some of them, though very few, expressed an intention of returning to Great Britain when they had made their fortune. This remark seemed strange in their mouth, when you noticed the rough garments in which they were clothed. Still it is from these hands, empty at the departure, from these wretched and coarse sons of toil, that England awaits after all the precious metal destined to increase the sign of public riches. More than one man who left in the same way for Australia in 1853, is now sending his alms to the mother-country to help the starving operatives in Lancashire. Would the newly-discovered mines

in New Zealand produce a similar result? It was not yet known, but the newspaper reports were seductive, and the faith of the gold-diggers was invincible.

It was nearly two in the morning when we arrived at Gravesend. There at least I was enabled to go ashore, for the vessel stopped to take in provisions and a few new passengers. All those who were on board shook my hand cordially: at such moments the last person to whom one bids farewell is not an utter stranger. These voyages to New Zealand have all the character of a formidable transition. There are frequently during the passage two or three deaths and two or three births; many vessels are also lost in doubling the Cape. I waited at Gravesend till daybreak, and then saw the poor emigrant vessel depart under canvas. I did not remove my eyes from it till it was far, very far away. How this black and winged mass, bearing to unknown regions the sorely-tried ones of the old world, had the air of hope floating over an abyss!

Have the Otago mines kept their promises? Most assuredly they have not proved barren; they have produced, and still produce, a fine gold harvest; but at the outset they entailed more than one disaster. As people were at the time under the impression of the auriferous marvels of Australia, the source of the new discoveries was to some extent submerged by a deluge of diggers.

Many of them had rushed headlong into the adventure with no means of a livelihood before them; they calculated on living from day to day on the gold they might find. Unfortunately, the noble metal is not sown broadcast: a man must have a lucky hand to grasp it; on the other side, the price of provisions being very high, several gold-diggers almost died of starvation, and others withdrew discouraged. After all, this reaction has been useful in the sense that it has only left on the spot the number of arms required to work a field of labour, and wealth which is assuredly fruitful, yet limited.

At the moment when attention was turned away from the Otago gold fields, the mania of enterprise was directed to another point of the English colonies. Some years ago, British Columbia had hardly a name on the map of the new world: now it is uttered by every Englishman. To what should such a change be attributed? My readers can easily guess—to gold. This discovery, however, had a slow and laborious development. In 1856 Mr. Douglas, the governor of Vancouver's Island, had written to the Secretary for the Colonies to inform him that gold had been found in British Columbia. He only received a dry answer: the English Government evidently distrusted the illusions which might be mixed up with this first investigation of the soil, as well as the false colours attaching to the alchemist's cru-

cible. Gradually, however, public rumour and the Parliamentary reports published in the blue book spread the great news. It was not till 1858 that the imagination of the English was inflamed: one of the first and probably most substantial consequences of these marvellous rumours was to open up to English trade a vast colony which they unconsciously possessed. The territory extending along the west coast of America, at the point of intersection between the United States and the Russian possessions had hitherto only been regarded as an impenetrable country, inhabited by savages who lived on the produce of their chase.

Most of the gold discoveries are anonymous in the sense that they were made simultaneously at several points and by several individuals. One of the first miners who drove a pick into the gold fields of British Columbia was a Scotchman of the name of Adams. He was travelling in the Hudson's Bay territory, and while stopping at one of the trading posts, he learned from a friend that Indians living near Fraser River had brought there gold-dust which they offered for sale. This news made him prick his ears, for Adams had been a miner in California, and he resolved to examine the facts for himself. He therefore set out on the track of these Indians, and eventually discovered them in their hut, occupied in washing gold in baskets. Having himself proceeded to the banks of Fraser River, he perceived that the ground

was rich in gold; he hired a couple of Indians and worked with them during three months. Tired of living apart from the society of white men, and having in these three months collected the value of over 1000 dollars, he left the spot, and at a later date told his story to some American sailors, who accompanied him next year to the scene of action. The rumour of this discovery, however, had been spread in Victoria, the capital of Vancouver's Island, and had even reached San Francisco, whence miners flocked up.

Since that time, the gold fields of British Columbia, at the outset badly known and badly defined, have assumed a certain place on the map. The richest indubitably appear to be those of Cariboo, situated along Fraser River, and opposite the Rocky Mountains. These were discovered by a young man of the name of McDonnell, of mixed race, half French and half Scotch, who combined in his person and character the qualities of the two nations. Like many of the sons of the Highlands, he was of athletic build, and had that contempt of obstacles which is probably produced by the habit of contending against the rude nature of the mountains; but to this power of resistance he joined a thorough Gallic activity of mind. His robust health had been undermined by a three years' stay in the mines of California, where he had constantly been exposed to the intemperance of the atmosphere and a thou-

sand privations. In order to restore it he had gone to the British colony, where, either by accident, or comparison with the auriferous spots he had previously seen, he pointed out Cariboo as the promised land of gold.

From this moment the news that reached England from the gold mines were of a nature to seduce the coldest imaginations. In all probability the glorious days of California were about to be reproduced on the soil of British Columbia. Gold in some spots was picked up in shovelsful. In the month of May, 1860, a Mr. Smith earned £185 6*s.* by one day's work. Many others, whose names were quoted, had realized fabulous sums in a short time. An Englishman, Richard Willoughby, had found in his diggings several veins of silver, but despised them: at Cariboo men only bent their backs to pick up gold. An old stone-breaker had returned to Victoria with bags full of yellow powder, that enabled him henceforth to live like a gentleman. The effect produced by such narratives on the mind of a people ever ready to tempt fortune and the sea, may be easily imagined. This wealth which issued from the ground in a few months or weeks, or even in a single night, flashed beyond the ocean like the bits of grass that attract the lark.

The fever of emigration, which had been slightly calmed since 1857, a period when upwards of two hundred thousand individuals

quitted the United Kingdom, seemed on the eve of being rekindled among the English. The abundance of this gold-harvest contrasted, moreover, with the want of cotton and the distress of the Lancashire operatives. Perhaps there was in the new colony a remedy for the evils which the numerous class of spinners is suffering from at the present day. There was an obstacle, however: several roads by sea and land lead to British Columbia, but they are all long and expensive. No one can think of this journey unless he has at least fifty pounds in his pocket. This Eldorado, it will be seen, is only protected against an affluence of adventurers by its remoteness and the difficulties of the passage. As regards the mines, this limitation of distance is perhaps useful. Like all obstacles it tries the strength, and only yields to an heroic will. The State, it is true, might have lent a hand to those who were entirely without resources; but the English Government, while favourably regarding the departure of the swarms that encumber the social hive, generally abstains from directly protecting emigration. This reserve can be understood more especially as regards British Columbia: the gold fields often prove deceitful after a certain lapse of time, and the British authorities do not wish to give emigrants the chance of some day reproaching them for having fostered ruinous illusions.

There are, besides, many English who are not arrested by the expense of the passage. In 1862 I went to the London Docks, where his ship lay, with an old gold-digger, who had made his first campaigns in the gold fields of California and Australia, those golden epic poems of the nineteenth century. As he had seen much, he was fond of telling anecdotes, and from him I picked up a good deal of information about the life of the miners. This man was affected by two very powerful passions acting in opposition — the gold fever and home sickness. When he was at the diggings he regretted England; and when he was in England he regretted the distant fields where gold crops up. This restless humour is, with a wandering disposition, a characteristic trait, by-the-by, which generally distinguishes gold seekers. The gipsies, those vagabonds who attach themselves to nothing, have stopped now and then at spots where public report announced the presence of the coveted metal. Working in a gold mine is a lottery; hence doubtless springs the glowing attraction which it exercises over the human heart. In this lottery the old miner whom I was accompanying to the docks had not hitherto been lucky; still he did not display any discouragement, and fully hoped to win the great prize some day or the other.

The steamer which was about to start for Victoria, and bore the name of the "Tynemouth,"

was a magnificent iron screw; she had about three hundred and sixty passengers, one-third at least of whom were about to seek their fortune with the pick in British Columbia. Most of the future miners occupied that part of the ship known as the steerage, near the forecastle. With but few exceptions, they did not take their wives with them, but a great number of girls had followed them as far as the vessel. There were farewells murmured in a low voice, while the men doubtless promised their beloved mountains of gold when they returned from the mines. These departures for Columbia and the other Eldorados have, by the way, made more than one victim. While travelling in Yorkshire about two years ago, I met near a stream a girl with dishevelled hair and haggard eyes, who was throwing nutshells on the water, while repeating to herself in a voice by turns gay or plaintive, "He will come back—he will not come back." The villagers told me that she had been the sweetheart of an adventurer who had started a long time ago for the gold fields, and who had promised to marry her. As she had not heard of him for months, the wretched girl had gone mad. Wives, however, would not be out of place in the new colony; for the truth is, that the Columbians are at present in nearly the same situation as the Romans before the rape of the Sabines. It can be supposed that the fair sex is consequently in

great demand there. The Bishop of Vancouver, struck by this inconvenience, has made an arrangement with a society established in London to facilitate the voyage for a certain number of intelligent and respectable girls. There were sixty-two on board the "Tynemouth;" one died during the voyage, and the rest reached the colony safe and sound, where they immediately obtained situations as servants or nurses, while awaiting better fortunes. As for those who entertain ideas of marrying, they have such a crowd of candidates that their only difficulty is in making a good choice.

The men, although a few sickly children of great cities had slipped among them, generally formed a body of sturdy and intrepid adventurers: but on arriving in the colony, they do not produce so favourable an impression on those who compare them with the old miners who have flocked in from San Francisco. The clothes of the former are too new, their limbs too white, and they bring with them too much luggage; while the latter are distinguished by bronzed features, worn clothes that render testimony of the services they have rendered, and by an air of self-confidence which they have acquired during an obstinate struggle with the soil. Between them there is the difference, which is noticed between raw recruits and old soldiers who have been exposed in distant isles to the influence of the sun and the

breeze. On arriving in Victoria, the gold seekers are still a long distance from their destination; the rich ground they propose to ransack is five hundred miles from the sea. In order to reach it, the bold miners must cut their way through virgin forests and over the crests of savage mountains.

The majority of them camp round the town while awaiting the moment of departure. A vanguard of young adventurers having started too early in the spring of 1862, doubtless in the hope of being the first to reach the scene, almost all perished of cold and hunger on the journey, and on reaching the gold diggings found plains of mud and melted snow. During the same year the current of seekers was divided into two branches—the rich and intrepid went to Cariboo, the others frightened by the difficulties of the journey and shortness of provisions proceeded to the banks of the Sticken River. This river flows along the Russian territory, on the strip of land extending from Mount Elias to Portland Straits for a distance of thirty miles, and leads to a region where there are several miles of gold. The Sticken is navigable by steamers and small vessels loaded with travellers and provisions. These poor man's diggings, as the English call them, though having the advantage of being more accessible, are only considered by the miners as a *pis aller*, or at the most a temporary resource. The ideal is Cariboo, and they fully determine to reach it

next year; they only thought it prudent to wait till the Colonial Government had opened roads to this land of Canaan.

The march of these caravans of miners across the desert is extremely curious. The road, if it may be called a road, is to a certain extent traced by a long file of carts, covered with a canvas roof and hoops, drawn by horses, oxen, or mules, and which contain all the digger's household goods, with his tools. Some men follow on foot, pushing a truck loaded with their tools, and giving a helping shoulder at different places to the donkey that perspires and puffs in drawing along a little vehicle, on which are heaped up pell-mell, some provisions for the road and empty sacks, which they hope to bring back filled with gold. There are but few women and children, but if there are any by chance, their hands do not remain idle, but handily assist in every sort of job. The courage of these travellers is really epic; they have been known to carry extraordinary burdens on their backs for enormous distances. From the earliest times the search for gold has produced prodigies, and the faith of the Argonauts is still in some respects that of modern history. On reaching the diggings, some young miners feel themselves at first disappointed; they hoped—to employ the expression of one of them—to see the gold growing out of the ground like mushrooms. These old dreams speedily fade away: they must work,

and work hard, to discover the rare metal. The gold mountains, as well as the islands of diamonds, only exist in the English Christmas pantomimes. Nature has decreed that at Cariboo itself, man must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. To form an idea of these labours, it is necessary to go back to the formation, and to some extent to the natural history of gold. At the period of the marvellous discoveries in Australia, the Professors at the Museum of Practical Geology opened at London a course of public lectures for the workmen who proposed to have their share of the plunder; and these lessons have assuredly not been sterile, for the theories of science are in this instance intimately allied with the practice of the miners.

Among the numerous zones of earth that form the bark of our globe, there is only one in which gold has ever been found in considerable quantities: it is the one the geologists distinguished by the name of Silurian rocks. These rocks are very old in the history of nations; and yet, if we may believe Sir Roderick Murchison, gold, in its present shape at least, is a rather recent product of the latest revolutions of our planet. Sir Roderick means by this that gold was doubtless in existence, in a diffused state of deposition, throughout the mass of Silurian rocks ever since their origin; but that it was only collected into veins, placers, and crystals at a much later and

relatively nearer epoch. What is this epoch? The learned English geologist believes that he can fix it a little while before the vast denudations of earth which took place over nearly the entire surface of our globe; and during which the great mammifera perished. In the chronicles of nations, therefore, the golden age would not be at the beginning of time, as it is in the fables of the poets, but almost at the end of the last period. What has been the cause that melted and agglomerated the auriferous particles in the crucible of the Silurian rocks? It can only be referred to those great chemical actions of nature known by the name of metamorphic forces, and in which heat and electricity combined with steam probably played a part. Everything announces, in fact, that the liquid metal was spread and ramified in veins through the hard rock, while the quartz, which now serves pre-eminently as the matrix for gold, was itself in a soft state, when it filled up the cavities.

This theory certainly explains the presence of gold in the old slate masses and veins of quartz; but how comes it that the precious metal is also found, and in great abundance, in certain alluvial soils, such as valleys, the banks of rivers, and the bed of torrents? Doubtless, through the action of water, wind, snow, and other erosive causes. The fragments which are picked up in this ground, and at a variable depth, in the shape

of irregular nuggets, dust, or even spangles, were originally detached from the mother-rock.

These two very different conditions, under which gold is found, associated with solid rocks or in belts of quartz, or else to some extent disintegrated by old inundations, and rolled pell-mell like a pebble amid detritus of every description in hollow basins, have given rise to two sorts of labour. Attacking the solid rock and threads of quartz, grinding them and separating the particles of gold they contain by the aid of mercury, is at times a profitable enterprize, but it demands a large capital, powerful machines, and a very large staff of labourers. In the alluvial soil, on the contrary, where what is called stream-gold is found, nature has already performed half the miner's task. All he has to do is to find what she has taken the trouble to tear from the secular rocks, whose basis remains impregnable. Very fine masses of gold or nuggets have been discovered more than once on the surface, but most frequently it has been found necessary to dig it out of the sand or alluvial soil. Moreover, as the king of metals is very reserved, and more ready to appear in the shape of dust, and as nothing must be lost, one of the safest methods is to wash the earth. During the Exhibition of 1862, an idea of the curious process could be easily formed at the South Kensington Palace, for a man expressly sent from Ballaarat, in

Australia, performed the gold-washing operation for hours in the presence of the public. If the ground is clayey, it is first thrown into a trough, when it is mixed with a certain amount of water, and stirred up with the pick in order to separate the greasy mud from it. When the auriferous sand or gravel is sufficiently liberated, the workman collects it and places it in a cradle, a sort of wooden box, almost of the same shape as a child's bassinette. The sand is spread out over a plate of perforated iron, and after pouring in a quantity of water, two men shake the cradle by balancing it right and left, and singing at times these words, familiar to miners—"Courage, my brave boys, courage! let us rock the cradle merrily. There is in it a new-born infant, which only asks to come out. What are our thoughts while balancing the quartz backwards and forwards? We think that we shall soon send a little gold to our families." During this period the grains of metal mixed with the refined sand fall into a lower compartment of the cradle intended to collect them. They have to be washed a third time in a basin which the man shakes up to the moment when the sand is entirely expelled, and then you see the gold-dust and lumps appear. The cradle belongs to the infancy of discoveries: other more ingenious machines for washing and separating the gold have been substituted for it in Australia, but the last have not penetrated at all into

English Columbia, where the miners continue to cradle the beloved metal with their arms.

The life of the gold-diggers and gold-washers is one of adventures and austere privations. They must remain for several months under a tent, be exposed during the day to all the intemperance of the atmosphere, and sleep at night on a hard bed or even on the bare ground. If one of them, being more delicate, desires a wooden hut, he is obliged to build it with his own hands. At a later date, it is true, as in Australia, towns lighted with gas take the place at the same spot as these canvas and board-houses; but nothing of the sort must be sought at mines in a state of infancy, like those of British Columbia. The miners in the latter colony pay the Government a very small tax to purchase the right of digging the ground and seeking for gold in it,—only a pound a year, and even this licence is facultative. Very few, however, evade payment, because the sum insures the miner the protection of the law, and secures him the possession of his claim.

There are men there of all colours and all countries,—Negroes, Indians, Chinese, English, Americans, adventurers from the different states of Europe; but they live together on a footing of equality. All the miners call themselves boys; their identity is lost under such a *sobriquet* as Dick, Tom, and Harry. The miner's attire is most generally a red or blue flannel shirt, cotton-

velvet trousers, and thick boots. Most of them pick or dig during the day, and at night perform the washing at home, that is to say, under their tent. Water is an indispensable auxiliary in the operations, not alone to wash the gold, but also to moisten the auriferous clay, known by the name of pay dirt. It is in this that the courage and enterprising spirit of the miners are most brilliantly displayed. This water is often brought for a very long distance to the scene of operation in wooden troughs, aqueducts, or canals cut in the solid rock. One of the greatest privations is the scarcity of provisions: famine reigns amid sacks of gold. About 1858 some men were paying as much as four shillings for a pound of mule flesh. Only one thing consoles and sustains the miners amid these severe trials, and that is the hope of making a fortune in a short time. The chances attaching to gold-seeking are, however, very uncertain and most capricious: it often happens that a claim, after being dug up and ransacked by a first party of diggers, then abandoned as decidedly barren, but taken up again by fresh comers, rewards the latter by offering them extraordinary results. On the soil of British Columbia the large nuggets which made the fortune of many a man in Australia are rather rare; but at certain spots the earth abounds in small precious fragments, and the value of 150*l.* has been extracted from a

single tub of dirt. The mode of working varies according to the character of the individuals: some only collect the heavy lumps, which is called "gutting the goose with the golden eggs," while others exhaust by skilful washings all the auriferous wealth of the ground they are working.

The mining season ends at the beginning of autumn: the miners form themselves into a caravan or column of safety, and return to Victoria with their bags full of gold. Some, who make it a principle that the gold-diggings are a gambling-table, and that they must retire from it at the right time, prudently return home with the dollars or sovereigns they receive for their yellow dust: but the ambitious ones make up their minds to return the following year, and believe that this time they have the treasures of Sardanapalus under their pick. Money gained in so short a time is dissipated quite as quickly. You no longer see the extravagances of 1853,—bottles of champagne and cigars lit with bank notes, at which period fortunes were made, lost, and made again in a few weeks; but it still happens in the vicinity of the gold-fields that the paupers of yesterday are the wealthy men of to-day, and become again the paupers of to-morrow.

We have hitherto regarded gold in its natural form: in the eyes of trade this form is rude and

clumsy: the mineral or powder is, moreover, mixed up with foreign substances which reduce its value. It is therefore extremely difficult to subject it to a fair assay when in this state. At the beginning, that is to say, at the outset of the Australian discoveries, these nuggets were sometimes sold below their value to agents, who carried on the trade of shipping them to England or elsewhere. At the present day nearly every man who has found native gold, no matter in what shape, proceeds to one of the banks which exist in all the English colonies: there the gold is melted, that is to say, converted into ingots, and the price estimated by weight, at seventy-six shillings per ounce. Let us now follow these ingots into the Bank of England, the great gathering-place of gold.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BULLION OFFICE—A MASTER REFINER IN HIS SHOP—INTERIOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT—THE MELTING-ROOM—GOLD IN THE FIRE—THE REFINING-ROOM—THE NATIVE LAND OF SILVER—THE PARTING-ROOM—SILVER WATER—VALUABLE TROUGHS—GOLD AND SILVER MELTERS—THEIR HONESTY—WHAT BECOMES OF THE METALS ON LEAVING THE CRUCIBLES—THEIR ARRIVAL AT THE BANK CELLARS—A DUBIOUS STORY ABOUT THE CELLARS.

THE vast edifice that bears the name of the Bank of England covers a piece of ground contained between four streets: in one of these adjacent streets, Lothbury, runs a long mass of architecture, which might be called the back façade of the building: in this there is an enormous carriage-gate studded with heavy nails, in a stone arch shaped like an arcade, and concealing an iron gate fastened to two solid folding-doors covered with sheet iron. At the other end of this vestibule there is a second open gate, leading into a third yard, where you find yourself facing a third closed door, lined up to a certain height with thick iron plates. In these plates narrow wickets

have been formed, as a species of loopholes, whence soldiers, posted behind the gateway, might, in case of necessity, fire on the crowd of besiegers without being themselves exposed to bullets. These strategic arrangements were made a few years back during the Chartist movement. In England, where every reform can be effected by the State in a legal way, insurgents are naturally supposed to be actuated by motives of plunder. This third gate defends a second court-yard, covered at a considerable elevation by a glass roof. Carts bearing a heavy load, at least judging from the strength of the horses and the quivering they impart to the pavement, pass from time to time beneath the two arches, and reach this second interior court-yard, on the left of which they stop before a building on which are inscribed the words "Bullion Office."

The English give the name of bullion to all gold and silver in any other form than that of coin. These carts, in fact, unload at the door of the office great wooden boxes containing metallic riches. It may be supposed that the public are excluded from this yard, and *à fortiori* from the offices. If, however, any one be summoned there by business, or admitted by virtue of a special permission, he pushes the door, and finds himself in a glazed passage, where he notices on the right and left two rooms lighted by lofty arched windows, and in which a dim religious silence pre-

vails. In one of these rooms—that on the left—ingots are received, weighed, and verified. My readers must learn that the Bank of England is bound by law to purchase any quantity of gold of standard fineness offered it at the rate of 3*l.* 17*s.* 9*d.* per ounce. This gold, wherever it may come from, and under whatsoever form, must, however, be first melted, as a precautionary measure, by the Bank gold-melters. There is, it is true, a method of checking the quality of the gold: it consists in cutting off, by the aid of a machine, a corner of the ingot, and subjecting this corner to a heat by the assayers; but still there might be a deception here: the corners might be pure and the middle of the ingot contain a proportion of alloy. In order to escape any subterfuge, the Bank finds it prudent—for an error would be serious in this case—to have all the gold and silver brought in remelted by sure and skilful hands. This delicate operation, which requires furnaces and chemical apparatus, cannot be performed in the interior of the Bank: hence it constitutes a branch of private trade, which we must follow at London to the gold-melters and refiners.

The same Lothbury which runs behind the Bank of England, gives passage to a lane which the inhabitants of London call Founders' Court. As often happens, the name has remained, although the motive for the name disappeared long ago: for if the inscription on the lane and

the vicinity of the Bank are proof sufficient that there were gold-melters here, they are not to be found at present. In London there are only three large establishments for gold-melting: they belong to Rothschild, Brown and Wingrove, Johnson and Mathers.* Rothschild's is by far the largest of all; but as it only employs foreigners, I prefer describing a house having a thoroughly English character. I was taken to Messrs. Brown and Wingrove's, melters and refiners to the Bank of England, by Mr. Johnson, one of the heads of the Bullion-office, who combines with marked ability very extensive acquaintance with the gold trade and political economy. We proceeded to Wood Street through a labyrinth of streets encumbered by cranes and bales being loaded and unloaded by iron chains. Over our heads, however, there were swarms of pigeons flying about bravely in the smoke, and doubtless waiting till the hour for business had passed away, in order to descend to the ground and pick up between the paving stones the oats scattered by the horses. This flash of nature, if we may call it so, was soon dissipated, and we found ourselves in Wood Street, a street entirely devoted to trade; but for all that, in an angle next Cheapside there is a tall tree that overshadows with an

* I mean melters who work for the Bank of England, for in Clerkenwell there is a large number of shops of a different character, where gold is melted for the jewellers.

air of defiance a cold bare court, formerly a cemetery. Some antiquarians have reckoned up the number of these trees, veritable prodigies, which have survived in the City of London the deluge of the population, the smoke and steam of the factories, and the invasion of the masons, who dispute each inch of ground.

We entered by a large gate which bore no written name or sign, and reached a yard in which a pump resembling a gas-lamp rises upon some stone steps. Here, we had before us three wings; on the left a private house; facing us an edifice which reminded me very much of a Methodist chapel, and on which was written, "No admittance," while the counting-house was on the right. It was through the latter that we entered the interior of the premises.

The counting-house is a large old room, tolerably well lighted, with wooden tables and counters of a round and pot-bellied shape, behind which the clerks stand. What most strikes you on entering is the number of scales: you see them of every size and every strength; for when gold and silver are in question, instruments which are of scrupulous exactness are required. In the same room there are frequently nuggets or ingots scattered about on the floor with an air of profusion and neglect. The master-refiner, a very amiable and intelligent gentleman, was kind enough to lead me round and initiate me into the secrets of the factory.

From the counting-house we passed into a place called the safe. It is a species of vault, in which the gold and silver are locked up. There was wealth here which might render a Crœsus envious —massive ingots of silver which I was not strong enough to lift, and gold-dust or ore which had crossed the sea in wooden boxes. The works may be divided into three parts, which are represented by the three departments of the refinery. These are the melting-room, the refining-room, in which the silver is purified from the lead and copper which are found in alliance with the metal, and lastly the parting-room, in which the workmen separate the gold from the silver, and the silver from the gold. We will first proceed to the melting-room.

This is a large fine room with an iron floor and ceiling and brick walls; it is the same which we have compared to a chapel, but the interior bears a much closer resemblance to those places of damnation with which the Methodist preachers menace their congregation perhaps but too often. At any rate we may fairly say, adopting the mystical language, that it is the purgatory of the precious metals. There are in the melting-room thirty-two furnaces heated with coke; when they are all lighted, 32,000 ounces of gold or silver may be melted at the same time. There were on this day upon the iron floor nuggets of gold that had figured at the Exhibition of 1862, one of which weighed 200 ounces, and came from Aus-

tralia; at the same time I saw masses of silver, some of which had been previously pounded under a steam-hammer that dealt blows of the weight of twelve tons.

The gold nugget was first deposited in a pot made of fire brick and plumbago, which is called a crucible. These pots, of all sizes, but nearly all of the same shape, are arranged by hundreds upon smoky planks the entire length of the room. One of the iron doors masking the red-hot furnaces is opened, and you see inside an incandescent brightness, which hurts the eyes. The crucible is plunged into this mouth of fire. So soon as the metal is in a fusible state, a workman skims the surface of the boiling gold with an instrument. This gold scum is precious: it is carefully collected and subjected to a species of washing, in order to extract those parts which are valuable. At the expiration of some twenty minutes the face of the molten gold displays itself in a pure state; it looks like liquid light. This lustre is in truth so vivid that only persons used to the trade can look at it with unprotected eye; strangers prefer to regard what is going on in the furnace through a piece of violet glass resembling that employed in watching a solar eclipse. In the meantime the workman has got ready an iron mould, terminating in a handle or tail. After throwing a few handsful of black powder on the surface of the luminous metal, he draws the

crucible from the fire by the aid of pincers, and pours the liquid gold into the mould. It is then carried into another room to be cooled by plunging it into water. It is brought back to the melting room in three or four minutes (gold becomes cold very rapidly), but it has changed its colour during the journey; from red it has become yellow again. Gold generally requires to be melted several times and heated with borax before it becomes entirely liberated from the foreign matters attached to the mineral; but here I only purpose to indicate the general method.

Silver for its part passes through the same trials, with this difference, that it is usually melted in larger quantities and in larger vessels. On the day when I visited the refinery, there was in the fire a crucible, into which old Spanish silver coins were thrown, and fell with a clear and harmonious sound. The workman heated a mould resembling in shape and capacity those tin moulds which English cooks employ in making cakes; he then spread chalk powder over the inner sides of the mould, in this also emulating the same cooks, who throw in a handful of flour to keep the cake from sticking. Then the crucible's cap was politely doffed (I mean the cover, but it really bears a great likeness to an English jockey cap), and shortly after the pot itself appeared. A fiery liquid ran from the inclined urn, and, after throwing down the mould,

the workmen, armed with long pincers, dragged along the iron flooring an incandescent mass of silver, from which sparks issued.

By the side of the melting room is the refining room. In the latter is a reverberatory furnace; this is the name given by professional men to a large furnace so constructed as to reflect the flame upon the bed on which are laid the metals it is intended to expose to the action of the heat. The mouth of the lighted furnace offers a magnificent spectacle. At moments you may see within a whirlwind, a tempest of fire and flame; at others, on the contrary, you perceive the surface of the liquid metal rippling like that of a lake under a gentle breeze, and with that lustrous whiteness of the moon when it seems to be poured out over the lightly-crisped waters. Such an apparatus, however, as may be assumed, has not been erected merely to please the eye: it is used to separate the silver from the lead and copper, which fall drop by drop into a lower compartment of the furnace. We have seen that gold principally came from Australia: whence does silver come? Nine-tenths of this metal reach England from Mexico and South America. Great Britain also produces every week thirty thousand ounces of native silver, which it has been found possible to separate from inferior metals by a scientific process. Refining, consequently, is an operation which consists in purifying, or, if I may venture

the term—which is authorized by the practice of the melters—in disvulgarizing silver.

One of the great profits of the refiner also consists in extracting gold from silver, or silver from gold. In this case he generally acts on his own account. He will buy at the market, for instance, amalgams of gold and silver, for which he pays higher than the scale price, in the hope of regaining the difference, or obtaining a surplus, by the profit which the separation of the two metals will bring him. This latter practice is delicate, and requires all the aid of chemical investigation. We shall be able to form an idea of this in the parting-room. There are in this room, which is lighted by a glass roof, vessels heated by gas, which greatly resemble, in shape and capacity, oil jars; but heaven defend us against treating them without proper respect, for these vessels, known in England by the name of retorts, are made of platina, and cost 1000*l.* a piece. It is true that they possess another advantage, in being everlasting: at the end of the year they are as young and substantial as on the first day. It must not be supposed, however, that they practise the maxim of doing nothing in order to live long. Silver, wedded to a portion of gold, is continually being placed inside them in an amalgam of nitric acid;* at the same time

* Sulphuric acid may be employed with much greater economy; but the use of the latter agent is prohibited in the City owing to

a thousand tongues, or more correctly speaking, flames, lick the external base of the vessel. The liquid is thus brought into a state of ebullition, and one of the first results is to effect at the end of a certain time a divorce between the gold and silver. The gold falls into one of the lower compartments of the retort in the shape of dust and with a brown colour, which renders it unrecognizable to profane eyes. There then remains the silver water, that is to say, the nitric acid, in which the silver is held in a state of solution. This water is poured into large troughs, and, as may be supposed, it is the refiner's object to recover the silver, which has to some extent disappeared in the liquid. It is an operation that takes several days; but it is effected without any aid, and you can follow in the series of troughs the progress of the divorce which is intended to restore the inequality of the natural conditions between the metal and the nitric acid. The first troughs, those into which the liquid has just been poured, contain a dull greenish water, on the surface of which a thick scum floats; this scum, though it has such a disagreeable look, is for all that dissolved silver. At a later date, that is to say at the end of three or four days, this same water becomes as blue and transparent as

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the smoke and other sanitary reasons. Baron Rothschild, whose premises are situated beyond the City boundaries, uses sulphuric acid.

that which laundresses employ in blueing their linen. Only narrow strips of scum are now seen at regular distances on the surface; copper-plates, which have been introduced into the liquid, have exercised a galvanic action on the solution, and have carried the silver to the bottom of the trough. There were in each of these troughs eight hundred ounces of silver, I might almost say silver mud, for the most noble of the metals next to gold presented itself in this stage in the form of a muddy substance, which did it but little honour. The refiner's art consists in torturing the metal into every possible way: he changes it into mud, water, crystal, or salt. I was enabled to see the close of these metamorphoses in a neighbouring shed. I saw here a dry dust, very dull, and of the colour of gravel; and I could not restrain the exclamation, "You do not mean to say that is silver?" "I hope so," the master-refiner said with a smile, "otherwise it would be unlucky for my interests." It was, in fact, silver, and the purest, and it only required to be put back in the fire to prove the fact.

Such establishments require a large capital. Not satisfied with melting the gold and silver of other persons, the master-refiner himself purchases the precious metals at times, and always pays cash. The furnaces in Wood Street employ twenty-eight workmen. It was formerly a custom of the house only to engage Welshmen.

At present the workmen come from different counties, but they form in every case a picked body of labourers, who are distinguished by a lofty stature, an honest round face, and Cyclopean limbs. When at work they generally wear a blue jacket, a gray paper cap, and a pair of thick gloves, to protect their hands from injury by fire. There has never been a case in which one of them has attempted to steal a part of the wealth constantly exposed in the refinery. This probity, which is doubtless in their character, is also supported by a material basis which the English consider of importance; I mean high wages. Most of them receive at least two pounds a week. It is possible too that habit engenders in these men an indifference for the gold and silver which pass so constantly through their hands.

A portion of the metals passes from the melting-house into trade. The consumption of gold and silver in the United Kingdom for works of art is estimated at 2,500,000*l.* per annum, while France only employs 25,000,000 francs. By far the larger mass of gold, however, is conveyed straight to the Bank of England on leaving the melting-house.

The ingots, stamped with a mark, and certain figures which henceforth prove their identity, are received at the bullion office. There they are weighed anew in infallible scales; such is the sensibility of one of these machines that a piece

of paper of the size of the palm of the hand, if thrown into either balance, at once makes it tremble. The quality of the gold is then verified, and when the ingots have emerged triumphantly from all these trials, they are conveyed to the Bank cellars on a small truck with four iron wheels, surmounted by a wooden platform. The cellars with their stone arches succeed or branch out of each other like the subterranean galleries in the crypt of a Roman church. Gas jets burn there the whole day long, and are confounded with the faint light that penetrates through rare openings. Beneath these arches also glistens what the old alchymists called solidified sunshine. You find there over again the small characteristically-shaped trucks, on which the bullion is carried, but they are now motionless, arranged along the wall, and loaded with massive ingots, which, in shape and thickness, resemble bricks of gold. The riches which these dumb and dark vaults have seen pass through them are incalculable. On the day when I visited the cellars, under the guidance of Mr. Alfred Latham, the Bank governor, there were one hundred enormous ingots on each truck, representing a value of 80,000*l.*, and I counted in a single cellar twelve of these vehicles equally loaded.

My readers will now no longer feel astonished at the bars and other defensive measures which protect these casemates of gold, both internally and externally. Still, if I may believe a tradition

more or less authentic (to which, I am bound to say, the present heads of the bullion office attach no belief) all these precautionary measures were nearly foiled, a very considerable number of years back, by an unforeseen circumstance. The directors of the Bank one day received an anonymous letter to the effect that some one had found means to penetrate into the cellars where the bullion was kept. The warning was regarded as a mystification, and no weight was attached to it. The letter, however, was succeeded by a second, and then by a third, in which the unknown correspondent proposed to the directors to meet them in the bullion-room at any hour they would have the goodness to select. This time their curiosity was greatly roused. They replied to their strange correspondent by the channel he had himself specified, and appointed midnight. Deputies from the Bank of England, lantern in hand, proceeded to the cellar, where they shut themselves up, and awaited the visit of the mysterious being. At the exact moment of the appointment they heard a subterranean sound: a few paving-stones were raised, and a man made his appearance. He stated that he was acquainted with an old drain that passed under the cellar, and he had made his way through the drain. The fact was verified, and the honesty of the man was rewarded, who, having found this flaw in the stone cuirass, might have made such an ample abuse of his discovery. It is probable

that this story was invented as a joke by the newspapers; but in any case at the present day such surprises are impossible. A subterranean drain no longer exists, and at night a guard composed of soldiers and policemen watches like the dragon of old round the Golden Fleece.

What is the destination of the bullion slumbering in these cellars? Slumbering is, I believe, the proper word, for it has done nothing up to this time, and moreover it is surrounded by silence and semi-obscurity, as comfortably as a millionaire in his bed-room. This bullion will be sent one day or another from the Bank to the Mint, in order to be converted there into gold coin. The Bank in fact serves as an intermediary between the dealers in rough gold and the old company of the Minters, which belongs to the Government. I do not mean that the intervention of the Bank is obligatory in the matter: the owners of the bullion might easily go themselves to the Mint; by acting so, they would even make a slight profit of three halfpence on each ounce, but they would have to wait several days till their gold was coined into sovereigns. According to the maxim "time is money," they find it more advantageous to receive the Bank-notes which are immediately paid to them in exchange for ingots. The Bank of England consequently buys up nearly all the gold which is to be changed into coin, and sends it in proportion to its requirements to the Royal Mint.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MINT AND THE TOWER OF LONDON—A POOR NEIGHBOURHOOD —THE OLD METHOD OF COINING—INTRODUCTION OF THE COINING PRESS — BOULTON'S MACHINERY — THE GOLD MELTING-HOUSE—GOLD IN BARS—THE MELTING-ROOM—THE DOG—THE CUTTING-ROOM—THE WEIGHING-ROOM—SELF-ACTING BALANCES — HEAVY, LIGHT, AND MEDIUM COINS—THE FIRES—THE BLANCHING-ROOM—THE STAMPING PRESSES—THE PYX—THE WORKMEN.

Up to 1806 English money was coined in the Tower of London, but the English Government recognizing the fact that the machinery could not be sufficiently developed within the confined limits of a fortress, and under the pressure of military arrangements, resolved to separate two thoroughly distinct branches of the public service. The edifice which is now called the Royal Mint, finished in 1811, was built after the designs of Johnson and Smirke. It is a three-storied stone building, in a style more or less Grecian, with two wings, and a centre decorated with columns; the arms of Great Britain are displayed on this part. This Mint, although perfectly detached, has kept up a connexion with the Tower, whose gloomy

head rises exactly facing it, flanked by bastions, and crowned by guns, which treacherously thrust their necks through the embrasures. Such a neighbour is evidently there in order to protect the edifice in case of need.

On the left, after turning one's back on the Mint, is the main entrance of St. Katharine's Docks, whose surrounding wall, massive and very lofty, is monotonously prolonged through the entire length of an interminable street. On the right and in the square, is a gin-palace with the pomp and tawdry splendour distinguishing these houses of business. A gate with two entrances defends the court-yard; one of these gates, guarded by two policemen and a sentry, is open for visitors and the Mint officials; the other, always shut, is also guarded by a patrol.

If we now wish to form an idea of the extent of the building in which the coining is performed, and the neighbourhood surrounding it, we must turn into a lane on the left, which leads to the rear of the building. Here we find ourselves in one of the poorest and most sinister districts of London—old wooden houses, with angular roofs, and three or four stories high, narrow and damp alleys, ground floors with dirty window panes, which are at once rookeries and shops. Such is the general aspect of Royal Mint Street: some of these shops belong to washerwomen, if we may believe the writing pasted on the door. I know not what

may be the colour of the linen which emerges from such spots, but most certainly the shop itself stands in great need of washing. One of the most melancholy of these alleys is St. Peter's Court. Here you see in front of the doors motionless paralytics; true statues of decrepitude; girls who vegetate, pale and colourless as flowers in the shade; wives whose face displays no mark of age, and who are obscured by wretchedness, as if by a veil. With all this, children swarm in the street: gravely seated in a circle on the pavement in groups of eight or ten, they may be seen playing with pieces of broken earthenware. This court is commanded through its entire length by a lofty wall, over which rise tall brick chimneys; this wall belongs to the Mint, and separates extreme indigence from immense treasures.

Very few visitors take the trouble of thus going round the building: supplied with a written permission obtained from the Master of the Mint, they enter on the Tower Hill side, pass through the gates along a gravel path bordered by two grass plots, and find themselves in a waiting-room. Here they sign their name in a register, and are then taken to the interior of the establishment by guides, who possess the talent of making you believe you have seen everything, though they have neither shown nor explained anything. A species of mystery broods over the coinage; and it is due to the politeness of the Director that I owe the

chance of raising a corner of the veil. Formerly coins were made by hand; strips of gold and silver were forged with the hammer and reduced to the requisite thickness; squares were cut in these strips, which were then rounded, and after this one of the rounds was placed between two wedges or dies, containing the obverse and reverse, which were to be produced in relief on the two faces of the metal. A blow of the hammer thus determined the double imprint. Who does not see here the origin of the consecrated expression, "battre monnaie?" At the present day, however, money is no longer coined but stamped.

As early as 1623 a French artist of the name of Briot invented a machine to take the place of hand-coining, which was a clumsy and most imperfect method: he offered this machine to his government, but not having been able to obtain its adoption, he crossed the Channel and went to England, where he enjoyed a most favourable reception. Briot was appointed chief engraver, and the new machine was erected under his superintendence in the Royal Mint, which was at that time in the Tower of London. For some forty years there was a species of struggle between the coining-press and the hammer, to which they reverted from time to time. The coining-press at length bore away the victory about 1662. From this moment English coins made great progress as regards the form and

purity of execution. From 1806 to 1811 the art of the coiners attained a further degree of improvement by a combination of machines now in the London Mint, and called after the inventor's name, Boulton's machinery. It was not solely from an artistic point of view that the modern system rendered great services, but before also through the rapidity of execution. Such is the power of the mechanical resources which the Royal Mint now has at its disposal, that a mass of gold to the value of 50,000*l.* may be received to-day at the Mint in the shape of bullion, and be handed back to-morrow in the shape of sovereigns.

Through what processes has the gold passed during this period from the hand of the workmen and the action of the machines? This will be taught us by a walk through the interior of the establishment. On leaving the waiting-room, the visitor finds himself in a large yard, square, and inclosed by vast brick buildings, whose yellow and monotonous hue contrasts with the rear façade of the Mint, which is of stone. The pavement in the yard is here and there intersected by tramways, or a species of iron ribbon incrusted in the ground, and along which roll in all directions trucks covered with bags of gold. You have here in front of you three departments, whose names supply a fair idea of the general divisions of labour: the first is the melting-house, the second the rolling-

house, and the third the coining-press house. The natural order of things bids us visit in the first place the department in which the gold will be once again tried by the fire.

On entering the Royal Mint the bullion or ingot of gold is received by the deputy master and worker: it then passes through the hands of the queen's assayer; lastly, it is entered in a book by the comptroller, along with the weight, such as it has been declared by the weigher and teller, the degree of fineness, the value, the owner's name, and the date of the day. When provided with all these certificates of merit, the ingot is now fit to be "put in the pot." It is in this stage of its fresh trials that we find it again in the melting-room of the Mint. This last room, with a furnace heated first with charcoal, then with coke, its crucibles of fire-earth and plumbago made red hot, and the workmen with their black faces and leathern aprons—greatly resembles what we have already witnessed at the gold-melters'. The remelting of the metal, however, has a special object here: and that is to bring it to the standard which is demanded in England for a legal tender. If the ingot be too pure, a little more copper alloy is mixed in the pots, and if, on the other hand, it does not come up to the standard required by law, refined gold is added to it. In any case, the proportion of the alloy must not exceed two parts of copper to

twenty-two of gold: the only gold coins in the world that attain this degree of intrinsic value are the English and the Russian.

When the metal has been brought to a boiling pitch several times over the fire, and displays a fine colour, the workmen stir it up from time to time with iron staves heated to a white heat, which, in the midst of the pandemonium, have a rather magical air, and then pour it into moulds. Each of the red-hot transparent vases whence the gold is poured in flames, contains the value of 5000*l*. The moulds form a species of hollow pipes close together, which, were they round instead of square, would not be unlike organ pipes. On the day when I visited the Royal Mint, I saw sixteen of these iron tubes filled in turn up to the brim. The moulds are then opened, and when the metal is hard and cold it presents itself in a new form; the ingot has been converted into a bar. These bars of massive gold are about three feet long and from one to one and a half inches thick; two of them weigh sixty English pounds. After being tried in scales they leave the melting-room, which is jocularly called the gold kitchen, and are put under lock in a species of dungeon up to the moment when the assay-master declares that they are of a quality agreeing with the legal demand. This judgment passed, they are placed in the hands of the old society of moneyers. Then in fact com-

mences the series of operations which will convert these bars into current coin of the realm.

The first scene of these mechanical processes is the rolling-room. In this room are piled up the gold bars which are now to be gradually reduced to the thickness of a sovereign, or even half a sovereign. For this purpose they pass under a series of rollers. A steam-engine of thirty horse-power communicates the motion and the life to these energetic steel rollers, whose duty it is to flatten the gold bars till they are transformed into strips thin as ribbons. These ribbons, which trail along the ground, are of the width of two sovereigns placed side by side; if this width is considered too large, circular scissors divide each band into two equal strips. The gold strips have certainly acquired, under the horrible pressure of the rollers, the requisite degree of thinness; but they have to undergo a final trial in another room.

This room, called the drawing-room, serves as a lodging for the draw-bench, which is regarded as a masterpiece of art. The duty of this machine is, as was explained to me, to regulate the substance of the metal, that is to say, to obtain a more perfect degree of uniformity in the thickness of the gold fillets or ribbons. One of the ends of the ribbon is introduced between two cylinders of polished steel into the mouth of an instrument called the dog. Several of these

machines have organs resembling those of animal life, and which have therefore received such names as fingers, tongues, paws. The dog itself has a round face, two eyes which are screws, a wide throat, teeth, a tail, and, like dog Toby, a little hat on its head. It advances, held by a long chain; with its paws it seizes the end of the gold fillet; with its teeth and its tail which is fixed on the chain, it drags the whole length of the ribbon towards the cylinders; lastly, its hat is lifted by the effect of a slight shock, thus warning it to loose its hold and abandon its prey, that is to say, the strip of metal, which has now passed through all the stages of flattening. The workmen then assure themselves that the strips are of the exact thickness of a sovereign, and if that is the case, they are transferred to the cutting-room.

This latter room is one of the finest and noisiest in the establishment; I am alluding to the noise of the machines, for the workmen are as dumb as statues—a character which is found, by the way, in most English factories. This silence allied to labour spreads a species of religious solemnity over the workshops, which might be easily taken for temples or places of prayer. The principle of the English is that it is not possible to do two things properly at once, an axiom which appears extremely simple, but is not at all practised in France, where we laugh, talk, and

work at the same time. In the centre of the cutting-room rises a great shaft, which turns at a certain height an immense revolving fly-wheel, beneath which is a circular platform about two feet in height. Around this circle are arranged at regular distances twelve massive cylinders or cutting-presses. These presses are fond of gold, but it is to tear it: at each bite they carry off a round morsel of the shape of a coat button, and they give one of these bites every second. Twelve boys undertake to feed them; that is to say, to place strips of gold under the punches, which rise and fall from moment to moment. At the expiration of a minute these plates—which are, as will be guessed, pieces cut out of the gold ribbons prepared in the drawing-room—are completely pierced with holes; they are carefully collected, tied up in equal packets, and like all the other shavings and refuse, they are sent into the melting-room, to be returned to the pot the next morning. As for the round pieces or buttons, known as blanks, they fall into boxes intended to receive them, and into which they rush with the liberality of Jupiter, changed into a shower of gold. We can now form an idea of the appearance of this powerful and yet delicate apparatus, the blank cutting-machine. The presses are animated by the great central wheel, which commands everything and sets everything in motion, being itself moved by atmospheric pressure.

From the cutting-room the blanks (round pieces still innocent of any stamp) pass into the weighing-room. Everybody will understand all the importance of this operation as regards commercial security, which is partly based on the sincerity of the coin. The weighing-room is distinguished by a peculiar silence, for here the very machines no longer speak. If the contemplation of labour imparts to the other laboratories of the Mint the air of a temple, the weighing-room is its sanctuary. Judging from the style of the architecture, and the selection of the ornaments, it might be termed the secret laboratory of a scientific museum. On a sort of counter running all round the room and leaving a vacant space in the centre, stand twelve self-acting scales. My readers must not imagine, through faith in the name, the shape of ordinary scales with a cross-beam and two dishes of equal size; these are rare and curious machines, enclosed in a mahogany box, standing on a pedestal of ornamented iron, and covered with a glass case that protects them from dust and damp: they more resemble so many clocks or chronometers. These machines were invented in 1842, at the Bank of England, by Mr. W. Cotton, one of the governors; at a later date they were adapted to the requirements of the Mint by Napier, who was assisted by Mr. Pilcher, who is still at the head of the weighing-room, and was so kind as to explain to me all the de-

tails of his department, with the intelligence of a practical mind and the obligingness of a man of the world.

Such is the perfection of the mechanism, that after at least ten years of daily service the most delicate parts of these balances are as intact as on the first day of leaving the hands of the workmen. The epithet of self-acting is certainly the one best suited to them; for, not satisfied with weighing, they mechanically perform one of the most minute operations of the mind, that of judging and selecting. These twelve machines hold council among themselves, and decide in the last instance, the value of all the work which has hitherto been done in the shops. Who would believe that, in spite of the excellence of the flatting-presses, and all the precautions taken to insure an uniform thickness, no two blanks of the same size are ever found exactly alike in weight? In this state of matters, it has been necessary to establish, as a remedy for the evil, a conventional zone in which the legal weight of gold coins is allowed to oscillate. These are allowed to weigh about one quarter of a grain too much or too little; they are then called medium, that is to say, compressed within the strict limits of the law; but above or below this they are declared too light or too heavy. Who shall decide this delicate question? The judge, that is to say the self-acting balance, summons in turn before his

tribunal the blanks, which might be called up to this point candidates for the title of sovereigns. This machine has a hand which advances and retires at equal intervals of about a few seconds, and on each occasion it thrusts a blank upon a species of steel index endowed with a marvellous sensibility. Here the machine hesitates—you might say that it was reflecting; at length it decides, and the blank, thrust onward by another which succeeds it, and is about to undergo the same trial, falls into one of the three interior compartments of the box, according as it is heavy, light, or medium. This scrupulous balance which discovers and denounces the slightest error with an inevitable certainty, which appreciates the hundredth part of a grain, reminded me of the formidable balance which weighs souls, in the ancient mythologies.

All the operations which we have just indicated are performed, besides, in the twinkling of an eye; each machine judges twenty-three blanks a minute; and as there are a dozen of them, these ingenious instruments can weigh 80,000*l.* in a single day. It has been calculated that the weighing executed by these automata produced an annual saving for the Mint of 2000*l.* Behind these dumb machines stand youths who are still more dumb, with an intelligent and serious air, who have indeed nothing to do but let the balances act for themselves, and feed them with

blanks. What becomes, however, of the gold pieces which have been separated into three classes in the three compartments of the weighing machines? The light ones are at once rejected (*vade retro*) : they are only fit for remelting. The heavy ones enjoy the right of appealing for mercy; they consequently pass through an ingenious machine, which is in the same room, and which, by means of a file, removes the excess of weight. It thus reduces a thousand blanks a minute. Lastly, the mediums pursue, without any alteration, the course of the mechanical processes. Still they have one trial more to go through; weight is not sufficient, and the blanks must also utter a musical sound. They are thrown one after the other forcibly upon an iron block, and the dumb ones are rejected and returned to the melting-pot the same as the light ones, for there is no other way of restoring speech to gold, but passing it through the fire again.

The operations which succeed each other from this point in passing from room to room, all converge to the same object, that of preparing the blanks to receive the legal stamp. They are sent into the marking-room, where a fresh machine awaits them, intended to form into a rim the circular outline of their flat, smooth surface. This machine is endowed with prodigious skill and activity; it "spits out" six hundred pieces of gold per minute. It receives them

through a smooth mouth, and, after exercising the requisite pressure, ejects them by another mouth with a projecting edge, which protects the circumference of the future sovereign. A man or a lad is sufficient to govern it.

From the marking-room the blanks travel into the annealing-room, where they halt to be softened. It must be borne in mind that, in the previous state, they would break the die rather than let themselves be even affected by it or by the stamping-press. In order to soften these hard pieces they are placed in rows inside a clumsy cast-iron box, much like the moulds which English cooks employ to bake pies. These moulds, which each contain 2,800 pieces of gold, are then covered with clay, and introduced into the mouth of one of the great furnaces which run all round the annealing-room. In front of one of these furnaces I was struck by the tall imposing stature of a greybearded workman with Cyclopean limbs and serious kindly face, who directs the series of operations which is also known by the name of pickling. When one of the iron moulds has been heated in the fire for twenty minutes, it is drawn out and thrown still flaming on the floor. When it has turned a little cooler it is opened, and the rouleaux are extracted, which no longer have that beautiful hue of glistening sunshine by which the king of metals is recognized. The next task is to bring

the colour back; this is a grand affair, and in order to form an idea of the means employed to effect this, we must follow the annealed blanks to the blanching-room.

There is not an English house, however poor it may be, in which there is not a washhouse. Here stands, about three or four feet from the ground, a copper fixed in brickwork, under which a furnace of coal is lighted. This domestic construction exactly resembles that in the blanching-room. The burning blanks are first plunged into a bath of cold water, which softens them, then into a solution of sulphuric acid and boiling water, which washes them and restores them a fine colour, and lastly into a second cold bath, which removes every trace of sulphate of copper which might be formed on the surface through a combination of the acid with the alloy. After they have been blanched, they are conveyed into an adjoining room to be dried. The gold is dried by rubbing and agitating in a sieve with sawdust heated on a drying-stove arranged for the purpose. This sawdust, which must be beech or boxwood (no other wood would produce the same effect) acts on the moist blanks like a dry sponge. In order to free them from all damp, they are exposed to the heat in a copper cullender, which resembles to some extent the perforated sieves in which chestnuts are roasted. From this point the blanks are judged worthy to receive the stamp

which will raise them to the dignity of legal coins. They are consequently transported on copper plates to the coining or stamping-room, where they are to be struck.

On entering this department, it is difficult not to be struck by the grand sight offered. I do not allude to the size of the room, which, in spite of the architectural nudity, is one of the finest in the Royal Mint: I especially allude to the imposing and superb appearance of the mechanical agents. On a stone foundation, from which stout oak pillars rise at regular distances to the ceiling, stands a row of eight colossal coining-presses. Eight boys, seated, and, as it were, buried up to the waist in square holes or false traps opening in the interior of the massive stone platform which is covered with cast-iron, throw sixty blanks at once, at regular intervals, into a trap; this done, each machine works for itself unaided by human hands. As these self-acting presses move by virtue of an invisible mechanism, they may be said to be alive: the workmen even add that they speak; and in fact they make as much noise as they do work.

On the bed of the press is placed one of the steel dies or matrices—delicate works of art engraved within the establishment after the original design of Mr. Leonard Wyon. This type has been religiously reproduced ever since the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne, and never

varies: Queen Victoria does not grow old on gold coins. At the moment when the stamper falls, the blank is closely held by an inner spring in a collar between two dies, one placed above, the other under it, in such a way that it can receive at one blow the impression on both faces and the edge. Each blow produces a sovereign, and the stamper deals from sixty to eighty blows a minute. At the moment when I visited the coining-room, there were only two machines at work. I remained for about an hour contemplating this grave and ingenious machinery; 7200 sovereigns were coined in that time; but what would it have been had all the presses been at work in the same room?—28,800 sovereigns, that is to say, a fortune. The sovereign when stamped, is at once expelled by a spring in the machine, resembling a finger, and rolls negligently, with the face of the Queen on one side and the arms of Great Britain on the other, into a copper dish, where it is piled up pell-mell with its companions, for the press continues to work seriously, and at each palpitation of this mechanical life a new drop of coined gold drops into the same reservoir.

From time to time these copper basins are carried off full to the brim; the sovereigns are collected and are carefully examined in order to separate the good from the bad. *Errare est humanum*, and these machines, in spite of the ex-

cellency of the work, being after all children of man, are at times deceived. There are sovereigns which issue from the press broken or badly stamped; they are set on one side, and like men who being initiated into the ancient mysteries broke down, they are compelled to go through all the trials again, beginning with that of fire. The English gold coinage consists at the present day of sovereigns and half-sovereigns. In some London shops, you certainly still find goods marked at a guinea; but this coin is not met with in reality anywhere, save in numismatic collections and in the shop-windows of some money-changers. The guinea owed its name to a portion of the coast of Africa; it was struck in the reign of Charles II. with the gold that had just been discovered in those parts. At the present day it is a nominal coin, a myth, and we should be surprised at still finding it employed in commercial language, if commerce, and more especially the liberal professions had not a considerable interest in preserving it. According to universal custom, a physician is paid a guinea per visit; hence my readers will comprehend that the doctor does not like the new monetary system; and expects a shilling to be added to the pound in order to maintain good traditions intact.

At the point we have now reached the gold coin is made; it has only to pass through an examination before being launched into the world.

Workmen or porters bending under the weight of the sovereigns, carry them, weigh them in bags, each of which contains 701 pounds sterling. It is to these men that a fortune is truly a burden. The bags are then opened, and two sovereigns are taken out hap-hazard. One of them is examined by a sort of council of assayers, the other is kept in a strong box to undergo one day what is called the trial of the pyx. This operation generally takes place with great solemnity in Westminster Hall, and on the nomination of a new Master of the Mint. Members of the Privy Council and twelve jurymen from the Goldsmiths' Company are present. The Lord Chancellor, or, in his absence, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is the president, and this tribunal pronounces between the Royal Mint and the public as to the sincerity of the coinage of the kingdom. Without waiting for the sittings of the pyx and the decision of a first tribunal, the sovereigns, from this time considered perfect, are most usually consigned for a few days to stone vaults with iron gates, until the Bank of England think proper to come and claim them. I was shown, during my rounds, one of these strong rooms, in which there is at times half a million of sovereigns. Gold is a majesty, and this vault does not bear a bad likeness to the hiding-places or cells of personal safety which are met with in the old royal castles.

Up to this point we have only turned our attention to gold, which owes, partly at least, to its fixed value the honour of having been selected as the sole standard of all English coins. Many silver and copper coins are also struck at the Mint to be employed as change. As the manufacturing processes are the same, with but slight differences, it is unnecessary to dwell on the latter. Between them, however, there is one difference to which I am bound to allude: all the operations relating to the gold coinage are presented gratis to the English public. Virtually, the first comer can carry to the Mint a certain weight of ingots, and he will receive at the expiration of a few days exactly the same weight and value in the shape of sovereigns. A present will even be made him of the alloy which enters into the composition of these coins; all the expenses of manufacture are paid by Government. Is the same the case with silver and copper? On the contrary, the Royal Mint buys silver on its own account in the open market, and very recently this department realized a large profit for the State by the conversion of the old and heavy copper coinage into a lighter bronze money. This reissue even gave rise, during a season, to minor trades. I remember seeing in the City men who were collecting the old copper coinage in hand trucks; then they conveyed it to the Mint, and made a small profit of two per

cent. All the new copper coinage, moreover, is not struck at the Royal Mint; the directors grant the royal privilege of manufacturing pence and halfpence to two merchants at Birmingham, who recently coined as much as ten tons of bronze a day. From 1816 to 1836 the value of gold, silver, and copper coins issued by the Mint amounted to sixty-seven million pounds. For a dozen years the production of coin has varied greatly; but in 1853 currency to the value of 12,664,425*l.* issued from the Royal Mint.

Such figures will furnish an idea of the activity of the machines and workmen. The latter have kept up the spirit, and to some extent the manners of the old English corporations. As a rule, the son succeeds to his father's place. Some of them live within the walls of the Royal Mint, others in town; but they all appear as it were of kin through family traits. Whether they live or not in those great cœnobitic buildings, in which existence is to some extent regulated by the uniformity of the architecture, they take their meals during the day inside the establishment. After their day's work, they cannot leave until the balance of the accounts is thoroughly settled in the books of each department, and they are certain that nothing is missing. A certificate is then handed to each of them, so that he may pass the line of sentries watching at the Mint gates. No religious difference is made among the work-

men: all that is asked of them is skill and honesty. In the shops most of them are at piece work, and earn good wages. At the end of a certain time they are allowed to retire, and receive a pension. The principal feature of their character is the species of contempt for gold and silver which familiarity engenders. One of them, talking about a rich person in my presence, asked how much he was worth, to use the English phrase. Some one having answered five thousand a year. "Nonsense," exclaimed the working coiner, "we make more than that in a day." There are also many other officials, overseers, and superior officers, most of whom reside in the establishment, and bear titles which remind us of the old guilds and corporations of workmen.

I left the Royal Mint with my head full of visions of gold; and I found myself on Tower Hill, where the sharp autumn breeze was scattering the last leaves from a row of trees, and whirling them under my feet. As in the old mediæval legends, in which the Fiend so often performs the character of a coiner, the sovereigns appeared to be changed into dead leaves.

The gold which left the Bank of England in the shape of ingots or bullion returns thither in the form of sovereigns in a vehicle accompanied by one of the officers of that department. We must follow it there if we wish to form an idea of the monetary circulation of England.

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST BANKERS IN GREAT BRITAIN—WILLIAM PATERSON—HIS UNHAPPY EXPEDITION—FAINT BEGINNING OF A GREAT POWER—SERVICES WHICH THE BANK OF ENGLAND RENDERS TO THE STATE—THE BEGINNING OF THE CITY—ROOTS OF A NEW ARISTOCRACY—THE MONEY QUARTER—PROGRESS OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND—DIFFERENT AGES OF THE BUILDING—THE DIVISION OF LABOUR.

It would be of no avail for gold and silver to abound in a country, unless a system existed for making them circulate. The English designate by the general name of banking the organization of the means which make metallic wealth fructify by distributing it. This organization is not very old. On seeing the extent of the financial and commercial operations of Great Britain, its magnificent credit institutions, and the degree of progress to which the English have raised the science of money, we might be tempted to believe that the germ of all these developments goes back as far as the origin of the nation itself. Still this is very far from being the case. The sense of business constitutes to some extent among the

English an acquired sense, and the history of their social greatness only dates from the 17th century. In the middle ages England was martial and slightly agricultural, like all the other nations of Europe. We must come to Cromwell in order to find in the famous Navigation Act an extensive commercial system. Everywhere trade has been the precursor of banks; in this branch, Great Britain was outstripped by other nations, whose wealth she was one day destined to efface. A bank was founded at Venice in the time of the Crusades. Others existed at Amsterdam, Hamburg, and Genoa, at a time when nothing had been created in London resembling the celebrated establishment whose history has been so intimately connected for two centuries with that of England herself.

The first who carried on a trade in money in England were the Jews. Bankers by instinct, if not by science and system, they had to contend with the laws of the kingdom at a period when lending at interest was regarded as usury.* My

* In addition to the edict of Edward the Confessor prohibiting lending on interest, there were other obstacles which opposed the development of pecuniary transactions throughout the middle ages. Laws existed forbidding, under severe penalties, the exportation of English currency. Changing it, even in the country, for foreign money was regarded as an exclusively royal privilege—one of the gems of the crown. In a narrow street, now called Old Change, was kept at that time the office of the King's Exchange, whither all those proceeded who wished to obtain English gold and silver for foreign coins, and *vice versâ*.

readers are aware how they were obliged to leave the country, after being persecuted for a long time by the Christians. Towards the end of the 13th century the Jews were followed by the Lombards (the name given at that time to traders who came from Genoa, Lucca, Venice, and Florence). The latter established themselves in London in a street which bears to the present day the name of Lombard Street. How is it that this same street is occupied nearly entirely by bankers? Doubtless by virtue of that mysterious law of succession in consequence of which Christian chapels were built by preference in cities on the ruins of pagan temples, and Protestant churches on the remains of Catholic churches. Might we not say that spots once consecrated by a social necessity throw out shoots which cling round and attach institutions of the same nature, although entirely renovated? The Lombards introduced bills of exchange into England; they lent money for a term, and demanded twenty per cent interest.

At a later date, in the reign of Charles I., they were supplanted by the goldsmiths, who, not satisfied with selling plate, rushed into speculations owing to circumstances which it is worth while recalling. It had been for a lengthened period the custom with English merchants to deposit their money in the Tower of London; there at least it must be in greater safety than in

the houses, for it was inside the stout walls, posterns, and moats of a citadel which was regarded as impregnable. All these precautions were, however, foiled by an enemy whom they had not at all foreseen. The King of England had on several occasions contracted loans; but Charles I. (doubtless considering that what is worth borrowing is worth taking) laid hands in 1640 on the wealth entrusted to the Tower.

We can easily imagine the impression left on minds by this strange mode of acting. The reputation of the Tower of London was for ever lost as a place of pecuniary security, and from this day the merchants resolved to keep their money under lock and key at home. The civil wars broke out, and with them fresh dangers. The masters were more than once robbed by their servants and clerks, who, taking advantage of the political troubles, found means to get out of the way. It was at this period that the London goldsmiths, who already formed a rich and powerful corporation, formed the notion of taking advantage of events to open deposit banks. They received money from traders and gentlemen who did not consider it any longer safe in their country houses or mansions, paid a small interest in some cases, and then lent out their money at a higher rate to well known persons whose fortune was temporarily embarrassed. They gradually extended the circle of their financial

operations, discounted bills to order, collected rents, and delivered in exchange for money deposited in their hands receipts known by the name of goldsmith's notes, which circulated from hand to hand. Who does not see in this the origin of bank-notes?

Up to this time, however, the two trades of goldsmith and banker had been merged in the same man; but the law of progress was destined to separate them ere long. During the early part of the Restoration Francis Child, who had been an apprentice in the shop of William Wheeler, goldsmith and banker, whose daughter he had married, separated one trade from the other on the death of his father-in-law, and founded the first banking-house opened in London. As if to indicate the connecting link between two trades which had so long been united, this house was built on the site of the old goldsmith's shop, and retained the original sign.* Other "new fashionable bankers," like Hoare and Snow, followed the example given by Francis Child, and about 1665 a bank of credit was opened in London for commerce and trade, which, however, met with but slight success.

England up to this period did not possess a national bank. The want of such an establish-

* This sign may still be seen in Child's Bank, Temple Bar, and represents a sunflower turning to the sun, with the motto, "So my soul."

ment was certainly felt during the Revolution of 1688. There are latent sources for nations as for individuals which burst forth at a moment of their history in consequence of certain social shocks. It is thus that the genius of business and the spirit of commerce were aroused in England. What immense developments followed the Revolution to which the credit institutions owe their burst into life? There soon emerged from the crowd a man whose brain swarmed with ideas, to use the English expression. His name was William Paterson, and he was a native of Dumfriesshire. He studied to join the church, and while still quite young visited the West India Islands "under the pretext" of converting the savages. I employ the words "under the pretext," because it seems that instead of occupying himself with his evangelical mission, he attached himself to the expeditions of the buccaneers, either as a spectator, or as a daring companion of their adventures. He returned to England with his imagination exalted by the great scenes of nature, and his head full of financial inventions. In concert with his friend Godfrey, he created the plan of the Bank of England, which met with a very lively opposition on the part of the goldsmiths, bankers, usurers, and a few Tories, but which was nevertheless registered by a royal charter of July 27th, 1694.

History offers no explanation of the motives which at that time induced the Tories to resist; but is it not easy to guess them? The old noble families saw with some degree of displeasure a new power—the power of money—being constituted by their side. There was no lack of arguments in such a case to cover menaced interests or alarmed ambition; hence William Paterson required a rare energy to triumph over such obstacles. Still he was a bank director only for a year. Must we conclude from this that, after taking advantage of his idea, means were found to evict him from the post which he had so fairly gained? On this point opinions are divided; but I am much afraid that Paterson was one of those men of business who are called "chimerical minds." Such minds, though often useful and fertile, have more than once given birth to ungrateful children; hence we must not lay too much stress on this reproach of ingratitude; for minds of this stamp, while excellent to start a work, do not always prove equally suited to conduct it.

I require no other proof of William Paterson's tendencies to utopianism, than his unfortunate and celebrated expedition known in England by the name of the Darien scheme. During the first voyage he had made to the West Indies, the stories of the buccaneers and the savages had enabled him to catch a glimpse of gold and dia-

mond mines in the interior of the country; hence came a fixed dream, which he pursued with a fatal obstinacy. What was this dream? It was, in addition to skimming the riches of the country and colonizing central America, the opening of a passage to the southern seas across the Isthmus of Darien and Panama. If this passage does not exist, we may say that nature has tried to make it, so greatly have the waters gnawn at and reduced the tongue of land which connects the two American continents. Despairing of success, nature seemed to have left to human industry the task of forcing a barrier already so reduced. So thought William Paterson. Saying to himself that this Isthmus was the key of the commerce and navigation of the whole world, he enthusiastically regarded the advantages which would result from opening a route communicating with the Indian Seas and the rich islands of Asia. He had also assured himself that there existed in this direction a certain extent of land on which neither the Spaniards nor any other European nation had been able to establish themselves, as it was occupied by a tribe of independent Indians. It was at this point, the mouth of the River Darien, between Portobello and Carthagena, that he intended to lay the foundation of his colony.

So long as William Paterson lived in obscurity, without friends and resources, he contented himself with brooding over his plan in silence; but

the creation of the Bank of England having obtained him position and renown, emboldened him to speak about the straits of Darien, the gold mines and the bond of union, which might be formed between the two seas. The way, however, in which his communications were received, was not of a nature to encourage him. At London, in Holland, at Hamburg, at the Court of the Elector of Brandenburg, he only met with indifference and coldness for the projected enterprise. What country was destined to become impassioned for this Eldorado? Suspicious and positive Scotland. It was with a species of frenzy that the Scotch, both male and female, rushed in crowds to subscribe to the Darien Company. Almost momentarily 400,000*l.* were collected at a period when the currency of Scotland did not exceed 800,000*l.* It was therefore one half of the public fortune which was about to be entrusted to the chances of the waves.

The expedition left the port of Leith on July 26th, 1698: it was composed of 1200 persons, on board four stout ships, and led by Paterson himself. It reached the coast of the Isthmus in two months, having only lost fifteen men on the passage. But instead of the countless treasures the adventurers expected to discover, they only found disease, famine, and the sword of the Spaniards, who saw with a jealous eye a rival colony established by their side. As if it was not

sufficient to have to contend with the desert, a climate destructive to northerners, and natural enemies, the emigrants were also exposed to the hostilities of the English Government, which pursued them even across the ocean. The famous East India Company had been greatly incensed at the formation of a scheme which threatened its monopoly, and had employed its influence and its numerous and powerful friends to turn the heart of William III. against the Darien expedition. The Scotch, after receiving no news for eight months, sent a second expedition of 1300 men to reinforce the first. The passage was a bad one, one vessel was lost in a tempest, and a great number of emigrants died on board the other ships; those who survived, exhausted and dispersed, only arrived in time to witness the death agony of their brethren who had preceded them. Though assailed by every misfortune simultaneously, the Scotch colonists held their ground firmly to the last moment. Their fate moved the pity of even their enemies: of all who had set out, only thirty saw the port of Leith again; and on starting they less resembled men than shadows and skeletons: they hardly had the strength to weigh anchor. Among these miserable men was William Paterson. This disastrous expedition left crushing recollections in Scotland which time has not effaced; and legendary lore has even added a feeling of the marvellous to a national

calamity. It is a tradition among the peasants of Roxburghshire, that on one night—a fatal night, on which the son of the Laird of Torwoodlee died on the Isthmus of Panama—all the castle bells began ringing the death knell, pealed by invisible hands. After such a catastrophe, I greatly fear that in countries where the value of men and enterprises is only judged by their success, the memory of William Paterson has been for ever obscured; but among the English, where merit and misfortune are both appreciated, the founder of the Bank of England and the Bank of Scotland still enjoys a reputation which has resisted the reverses of fortune.

The rising bank, first known by the name of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, was at first installed in Mercers' Hall, where it only remained a few months, and was then transferred to Grocers' Hall, where it occupied one large room. In this hall directors, secretaries, and clerks worked together, seated in accordance with the rank they held in the administrative hierarchy. The beginning was obscure and laborious. Although the transactions of the Bank of England were so restricted at that time, this establishment from the beginning exercised an influence over the commerce and political life of the country. It brought down the rate of interest, increased the currency circulation, and above all drew the nation out of the hands of extortioners.

It must be borne in mind that the English Government up to 1694 was at the mercy of lenders. With time and the growing embarrassment of the Treasury, royal loans had even become very difficult to negotiate. The kings were obliged to send their agents into the City, and especially to Exchange Alley, to beg money. Beg is the right word; for the proud Henry VIII. himself implored it as a matter of great grace. Who can feel surprised at this odd state of affairs? An absolute king can attack the aristocracy with fire and sword, send barons and bishops to the Tower of London, and abolish abbeys; but 'ware money! Imprisoning the merchants would have resulted in drying up the sources of the public wealth. The most absolute sovereigns were, therefore, reduced to court the mysterious power of gold, which withdraws and contracts under violence.

From this point of view, the foundation of the Bank of England must be considered a great social fact. At a time when the English nation was beginning to be constituted on principles of liberty, it served as a link between the people and the Government: on one side, it resuscitated the confidence of capitalists; on the other, it raised the dignity of the State. Is it necessary to add that it contributed from this time in developing on a grand scale the power of the commercial element? The importance of the City merchants in the economy of English society is not suffi-

ciently known. There are other and higher bodies which make a greater display; but there is not one which exerts a more real influence over the direction of public affairs. All great enterprises require money, and the City merchants hold the strings of the State purse. These results were developed even during the lifetime of William Paterson: the Bank was scarce established ere it aided in the success of the campaign of 1695. It was, however, decreed that the two men who had produced this considerable result, should meet with an unhappy end. Godfrey, the zealous coadjutor of Paterson, undertook the perilous task of conveying money to William III., who at the time was besieging Namur; but while he was conversing with the king in the trenches, he was killed by a cannon-ball.

The Bank of England has since that period gone through various fortunes, some of which have been stormy enough, while increasing its services and importance with every year. The privileges of the company, which were at first limited to eleven years, were afterwards renewed and extended several times by acts of Parliament. It is true that every new lease, if we may call it so, was taken advantage of by the State to contract fresh loans or obtain money under various forms. The Bank thus obtained permission to live. Once established as an institution, it marked by more than one curious

episode its influence on the development of public affairs. We will not, however, dwell at any great length on the past history of the Bank, for it is its present state that most interests us.

There is not throughout London a livelier main artery than that which leads from the Strand to the Mansion House. The foreigner who is curious to observe the physiognomy of this tumultuous route will do well to mount the roof of an omnibus. In proportion as he approaches the heart of the city he will notice the forest of men grow more dense—a moving wood like that of Birnam in "Macbeth." I purposely say men, for on approaching the City the number of women is perceptibly diminished, except perhaps in the case of one class of women attracted by the flashing of gold, like moths by a candle. We may also say that the faces change their character: the passers-by are distinguished in Cheapside by a rapid busy gait, a serious air, and that restlessness which accompanies the fruition of great negotiations. One step further and you really find yourself in the centre of the world of money. If you turn your back to the Mansion House, you have on your right the Exchange and the Stock Exchange; while facing you is the Bank of England.

The latter building has been composed of shreds and patches; but a skilful hand has undertaken

to connect the parts built at different epochs, and imprint upon them a character of architectural unity. The first stone was laid in Threadneedle Street in 1732, on the site formerly occupied by the house and gardens of Sir John Houblon, the first governor of the Bank. In 1732 the building, which was the work of the architect George Sampson, was finished. It was a very small building, which was scarce noticed by passers-by, as it was masked by St. Christopher-le-Stocks church, taverns, and some twenty houses. We can form an idea of what the original building was by visiting the Pay-hall, which is now facing the principal entry, and at one end of which the statue of William III. may be seen. This hall, whose architecture has been remodelled, formerly represented nearly the entire Bank. About a quarter of a century later, that is to say from 1770 to 1773, the edifice, which was constantly growing, had already devoured a church and a whole parish. Of this second series of works several traces are visible at the present day, in wings added to the main building by Robert Taylor, and an elegant parterre with two tall trees, grass-plots and a fountain. This parterre, which spreads around freshness and verdure is in one of the Bank courtyards, was formerly the graveyard of St. Christopher-le-Stocks, and the law prevented any building being raised on consecrated ground. It was the dead, therefore, who

made the public a present of this pleasure-garden.

In 1788 Sir John Soane, having been appointed Bank architect, rebuilt various parts of the edifice, and gave it the general character which it retains to the present day. I saw in the room of Mr. Alfred Latham, who is now governor, an excellent painting by that clever artist Marlow, representing the Bank of England as it was in 1802. The old Royal Exchange then advanced at right angles upon the square where the Wellington statue now stands, and its tower or belfry, surmounted by an iron weathercock, occupies the background. This Exchange was burnt down in 1838, and was followed in 1842 by a building that affects the form of a Greek temple. As for the Bank, it has changed but little since that time. In 1848, however, Mr. C. R. Cockerell, the successor of Sir John Soane, gave a greater relief to the façade, and introduced some useful changes in the ordonnance of the edifice. At the present day this edifice, or, to speak more correctly, this collection of edifices, contains externally and internally columns of every order of architecture. An imitation of the Temple of Venus at Tivoli; a portico designed on the model of the triumphal arch of Constantine, and stone allegories, one of which, executed by Banks, represents the Thames and the Ganges. This mixture of all the classic styles, applied to a great

business centre, doubtless causes more than one objection to be raised. The general appearance, however, is not the less imposing, and this association of ideas, strange though it be, seems moreover inspired by the very nature of the spot. In 1805 a Roman mosaic pavement, since transported to the British Museum, was discovered underground among ruins. Everything announces, in fact, that this part of the town was formerly the head-quarters of the foreign occupation, or, in a word, Roman London. Another power from that of the sword has followed on the same spot the dominion of the old rulers of the world. The Bank is now the Capitol of England.

The grandeur of the Bank of England does not reside, however, in the Babylonian edifice, whose gradual development only displays the ever-increasing extent of the financial transactions. It represents at the present day the greatest accumulation of riches existing in the world. Its influence is felt on all the markets of Europe, and there are no great enterprises in the most remote countries where it is not to some extent present through its intervention and capital. Richard Cobden relates how, when travelling in Turkey and Greece about the year 1837, he saw at the little island of Syra Greek merchants, telescope in hand, watching with the greatest anxiety for the arrival of the vessel which would bring them news from the Bank of England.

Such an institution represents, as it were, the heart of the commercial and industrial system among a mercantile people, or, as has been said, it is the fundamental plank of the ship called Great Britain.

Although the mass of business dealt with in this vast establishment is so enormous, the operations of the Bank may be divided into three branches. There is in the first place the department for the issue of bank-notes, which was separated from the rest by Sir R. Peel's bill of 1844. The Bank of England also pays the interest of the national debt, and this service has given rise to another administrative branch—the management of the national debt. Lastly, it is the government cashier, the banker of bankers; it discounts bills, and receives deposits of money or precious merchandize. This third branch of business is represented by a third department—public and private banking. Such are the different scenes of action we must visit if we wish to know the Bank of England in the entire extent and diversity of its vast operations.

CHAPTER XI.

PRINTING BANK-NOTES—THE COPPER PLATES, PAPER, AND PRESSES —WHAT PAPER MONEY REPRESENTS—SIR ROBERT PEEL'S REFORM—CONSEQUENCES AND SIGNIFICATION OF HIS BILL— AN UNEXPECTED USE OF BANK NOTES—FORGED NOTES— CHARLES PRICE—HOW TO RECOGNIZE COUNTERFEITS— CRUIKSHANK AND THE PENALTY OF DEATH—THE PANIC OF 1825—PRESENT SITUATION OF THE BANK—LOST BANK-NOTES—MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF A NOTE—PAYMENT IN DUPLICATE BY THE BANK OF ENGLAND.

THE issue department of bank-notes embraces several detached rooms, which are, however, connected together by the responsibility of the duties, like the organs of the same system in animal life. One of the most extensive branches is the printing-office with all its dependencies. It must not be supposed, though, that only bank-notes are printed there: all the large account-books employed in the Bank—and the consumption is enormous—are prepared and bound in this part of the establishment. Like the other departments of the Bank, the printing-office is watched over by two persons, the superintendent and his deputy; the latter undertakes all the

duties of the former when necessary. There are also about one hundred workmen, men and boys, without counting a few women. The greatest amount of the work is performed, however, by steam-engines, which have the sense of many men. They rule, cut, and print thousands of sheets of paper with a dexterity which is almost fabulous. One of the most curious has a round black head, which seems to emerge from the wall, and sinks and rises every moment like the head of a Chinese joss. It appears to have a strange and platonic love for paper, for at each movement it kisses one of the upper corners of the sheet, and each of these kisses leaves an indelible mark. These marks are figures intended to number the pages of the transfer book of stocks, so that no hand, however clever it may be, can tear out a sheet with impunity.

However interesting may be the series of operations performed by an army of wheels and pistons, who does not wish to reach the printing-office of bank-notes? For this purpose we must ascend a narrow winding flight of stairs like those of a donjon; on the way we pass through iron gates and doors that open and shut with a snarling of bolts; everything announces that we are about to enter the presence of a prisoner or of a sovereign, for both require to be guarded. These measures of prudence are not the only ones which have been deemed necessary; at regular distances

are rows of light leathern buckets on which we read the words *Bank of England*, and perpendicular iron pipes, enveloped in straw and covered with coarse sacking to defend them from freezing during winter. These pipes are fed by a reservoir which occupies the roof of the building, and is filled by an artesian well dug in the interior of the Bank. Such precautions have evidently been taken against fire. After going up one or two storeys, we at length enter a room with an iron floor and walls lined with wooden cupboards, in which the bank-note paper store is kept. Such is the majesty in favour of whom this part of the building has been placed, as it were, in a posture of defence. The paper is manufactured at the Laverstoke mills, in Hampshire, by Mr. Portal, who has held for many years the privilege of supplying the Bank of England. This paper, of a creamy colour and with a contexture which is recognized through a mere crumpling by practised fingers, is most usually encrusted with characters impressed on the thickness of the pulp, which the English call the watermark. On reaching the bank-note paper store, it is arranged in the cupboards in packets of five hundred sheets, each sheet representing longways the surface of two notes. It remains in this store for several months, until the time arrives to put it under the press. This time is determined by the orders of the chief cashier of the Bank, who writes to the head of the printing-

office to regulate the number of the issue. With this begins the series of operations which will transform a sheet of white paper into a legal tender.

The bank-notes are twice printed, the first time in skeleton, that is to say, without date, number, or signature, and next in a perfect state. Let us enter the room where the virgin paper receives under the press the first form of what the English call a promissory-note. This is a large printing-room, lighted by tall windows, in which stand iron machines moved by the invisible force of steam. Each of these machines can print 3000 notes an hour, and as there are three machines at work, an average number of 30,000 to 40,000 embryonic bank-notes can issue from the press in one day. To the latter is attached a species of dial with a hand, which, instead of marking the minutes, states the ever increasing number of bank-notes pulled, and thus defies any idea of larceny. Each machine is served by four lads and a workman; the men earn 2*l.*, the boys 6*s.* per week; but when the latter have attained the age of fifteen they are placed by the Bank in houses of business or are apprenticed to a trade. I saw one who, having lost an arm in the service of the establishment, is now employed in the offices. Is it not, moreover, curious to see the apparent signs of public wealth growing as it were under these poor and innocent hands? The

skeletons of the notes are printed in pairs on the same sheet of paper: they are brought into contact with a copper-plate.

These plates are not engraved, as might be supposed, in *taille douce;* one of the inconveniences of that process would be to render the printing too slow. All the pieces which compose the characteristic features of a bank-note are, on the contrary, secured to one another by a galvano-plastic system, and stand out in vigorous relief on the plate. Each of these copper-plates is manufactured inside the Bank by one person, and in a retired room, which resembles slightly a chemist's laboratory. They are all formed after a type, an original model which is never used, but kept with great care in order to reproduce it intact from generation to generation. One of the most remarkable details in an English bank-note is the vignette or medallion executed by the celebrated artist Maclise, and representing a maiden with a shield, a trident, and a beehive, which may be taken either for a figure of the Queen or for the myth of Britannia. In this same rather mysterious room, I saw old worn-out plates, laid aside, which in their time had produced millions of notes, resembling to some extent those men who, after imprinting a value on events and certain acts of life, fall for the future into oblivion and obscurity. The skeletons of bank-notes, after they have issued the first

time from under the press, are left at rest for some time, until a second order from the chief cashier informs the overseer of the number of notes which must be finished in order to supply the wants of the Bank.

Finishing bank-notes is, as will be guessed, adding to them the date, number, and signature,* which constitute in trade the principal elements of a binding promise. This second operation takes place in another printing-room. Here the notes already charged with certain characters and designs more or less emblematical, pass through a new series of presses, or stamping-machines, the invention of Mr. Oldham. The latter, not satisfied with printing what was wanting in the notes, perform at the same time the character of compositors. Each time that a note is numbered, a steel spring, a real finger, acts inside the machine and substitutes a fresh figure for the one which has just been used in marking a note. The two first letters and the number of the series form the essential parts of a bank-note, and so long as they survive, the note is not destroyed. Even in the event of one of these precious pieces of paper entirely disappearing, the person who has retained its number in his memory or in writing can go to the Bank; there a book is con-

* The notes of the Bank of England are signed according to their value by three different names: one for bank-notes of 5*l.* and 10*l.*, two for notes of 20*l.*, 50*l.*, and 100*l.*, and three for 1000*l.* notes.

sulted, which was shown me, and which contains as it were the exact description of every note produced in the printing-office. If the result of the investigation be favourable to the claimant, he receives another note, after proving his personal solvency, in the event of the note which is supposed to be destroyed turning up again some day.

The notes, from this moment invested with all the signs of a legal value, now pass into an office where they are examined; if, after this verification, they are allowed to be faultless, they are arranged in packets of five hundred and sent off straight to the treasury. This room, which is quite detached from the printing-office, is on the ground-floor, and is filled through its entire length with safes or handsome iron cupboards. In the latter there are bank-notes and gold. At this stage we must ask, what is the guarantee for the bank-notes which fly off in thousands from the press? Up to the present time we have only had paper before our eyes, and science, in spite of its admirable services, has not yet discovered the secret of imparting a value to a white piece of paper by the impression of a few signs. What then do these pieces of paper represent, which are accepted by everybody as money? To answer such a question, we must go back to 1844, a memorable epoch in the financial annals of Great Britain.

In that year, a great statesman and great poli-

tical economist, Sir Robert Peel, struck by the abuses which had attached so long to the indefinite issue of bank-notes, brought forward the famous bill which was intended to limit the circulation of paper-money. As regards the Bank of England, this bill established that it should be authorised to issue fourteen millions of bank-notes hypothecated in the following way: eleven millions on the debt which the English Government has contracted with the Bank at various periods, and three millions on Exchequer-bills or other substantial securities. Beyond this amount, every note issued, no matter for what amount, must be represented in the Bank coffers by an equivalent deposit of specie. The same bill restricted the privilege of issuing notes to those banks which were in existence at the time, and had enjoyed this privilege prior to 1844; but such a privilege would be refused to all those established posteriorly. Who cannot at once detect the spirit of the new law? It was Sir R. Peel's intention that the circulation, composed partly of gold, partly of silver, should be subjected to precisely the same fluctuations in the market as if it had consisted entirely of gold.

The principles on which this reform was based find at the present day zealous defenders among the heads of the Bank of England. Far from encouraging certain illusions about the value of paper-money, they openly declare that it has

nothing at all to do with the fortune of a country. There have certainly been dreamers in England, who believed that paper could be substituted for coin, and that in such a case the exportation of gold and silver to foreign countries would open a new source of material riches; but these views and reasonings have never converted practical men. The latter only recognize two advantages possessed by paper over coin—the facility which it affords for large payments, and the saving of expense in coining. Gold and silver are costly symbols of exchange; they lose through use and friction one per cent. in the course of a quarter of a century, while paper loses nothing. Who cannot now see whence comes the relative value of bank-notes, and what the limit is of this value? Since 1844, paper no longer multiplies money: it only represents it. There are in the safes of the Bank treasury notes whose nominal value is in some respects consolidated by an equivalent sum; these are all ready for issue. There are others, on the contrary, which, as they have not yet received this pecuniary consideration, have up to the present no intrinsic value beyond that of the paper. We might say of the latter that they are unborn. What imparts a soul and life to bank-notes is the gold which is deposited in their stead as a hostage.

Those notes which have left a substitute in the coffers are sent from the treasury to the issue

department, whence they are distributed to the public, and more especially to bankers, in large parcels. There are two modes by which these notes enter into circulation: they are either given in exchange for sovereigns or else handed in payment of cheques by the different branches of the Bank. Each note issued is registered with its number and date in the books of the issue department, and these books are carefully balanced at the close of each day. Those notes which have not left the Bank portfolios are returned the next morning to the cashier. Could any one follow these pieces of scattered paper in their flight through the world! Like men, they have very different destinies; some cross the seas and fly to the extremities of the globe; while others scarce leave the walls of London; these pass from hand to hand, with their back all covered with signatures, while those sleep tranquilly in a rich man's pocket-book; but generally they are mixed up in all the actions of life, in good as well as evil, having at one moment a consciousness of deadly sins, but also serving at times as an intermediary for benevolence, honesty, and the domestic virtues. As the thousand services of bank-notes are well known, I will only dwell on cases of which the department entrusted with their issue had never dreamed. Toward the close of the last century, an English traveller who had lost his way in the pleasant lanes of Hereford-

shire, turned his horse in the direction of a poor cottage. Here he noticed a window in which a broken square had been stopped up with the manuscript copy of an old ballad, in order to intercept the action of the wind, but by the side of the ballad was pasted a bank-note for 20*l*. The aged couple to whom the cottage belonged did not know how to read or write. Imagine their joy on learning from the traveller's lips the existence of a sum of money which they unconsciously possessed! Another five pound note was carried by the current of affairs, at the beginning of this century into the house of a Liverpool merchant, who read with surprise on the back of the note: "If this note ever falls into the hands of John Dean, at Longhall, near Carlisle, he will know that his brother Andrew is a prisoner in Algiers." The circumstance was published in a paper, and the news passed from one to another up to the family of the captive who had issued this singular missive at all hazards.

The life of a bank-note is generally very short. By life must be understood the space of time which elapses from the moment of issue to that of its return. As every note is a promise, we can easily understand that it naturally tends to a realization. Still some singular exceptions to the short-lived destiny of these representative values might be quoted. I saw in the Bank archives a note which, issued in 1724, did not

return to the fountain-head till July 20, 1860. If we merely calculate the interest at five per cent. we shall find that this paper-money lost a very considerable amount by remaining idle or playing truant.

The return of the bank-notes gives rise to a very important service which is carried on in a large old room, where one hundred clerks and twenty mechanics are posted. The bank-notes generally arrive from the bankers' in large parcels, and are every moment presented at a desk guarded by a grating such as is found in every business-office. The first point is, as may be supposed, to verify the note. Who does not know in reality, that there are real and false notes in the world? The first forged note was presented at the Bank of England in 1758: the criminal was a man of the name of Richard Williams Vaughan. Since that time, similar attempts succeeded each other with a deplorable constancy. One of the most celebrated English forgers was Charles Price. As actor, valet, keeper of a lottery-office, broker and gambler he had descended every round of the ladder which must necessarily lead him to criminal deeds. He learned the art of engraving with a rare persistency, and a great deal too successfully, made his own ink and paper, worked his notes on a press manufactured with his own hands, and counterfeited in a wonderful manner the signature of the cashiers. Master of all these secrets

he spread his paper about the town. In 1783 the City cashiers paid in one day as many as fourteen forged notes, each of 50*l*. Some of these notes even defied more than once the perspicacity of the Bank clerks—so marvellously were they imitated; the fraud was only too often not discovered till the notes had been cashed. Not satisfied with counterfeiting paper-money, Price was no less skilful in disguising his age, person, name, and playing every character. People frequently met in the streets of London a man who looked like a foreigner dragged along in a chair, with his legs wrapped up in flannel, a cloak buttoned up to his mouth, and a black patch over his left eye. This apparently gouty old man obtained a servant by answering advertisements, whom he sent, without letting him out of sight, to buy up a great number of lottery-tickets. This same servant was also watched without knowing it by a woman, who followed him about town like his shadow, moved when he moved, stopped when he stopped, and waited at the door when he entered an office. This woman was Charles Price's only accomplice and mistress. The movements of the servant, however, aroused the suspicions of the police: he was arrested, and told what he knew; but his master had already disappeared like a spirit of darkness, and the forgeries continued to circulate. Price divided his time between manufacturing false notes and falsifying notes really

issued by the Bank, but to which he adroitly added one or two figures. In this way he one day converted a 10*l.* note into one for 1000*l.*

"The devil," as the English say, "ends sooner or later by deserting his friends." A false note which Price had paid to a London goldsmith for plate with which to heighten the luxury and magnificence of a princely table, at length led to his real name and address being discovered. After robbing the Bank for several years, Price, seeing that he had no means left of escaping justice, ended by robbing the hangman: by the aid of his son, he procured the means of self-destruction. The court had only a corpse to pass sentence on; but, according to an old English custom, the remains of the suicide were buried at midnight at a solitary cross-road, and a post of infamy was raised over this nameless tomb.

The repression of the crime of forgery gave rise, some forty years ago, to a sharp controversy in England. My readers are aware that the law formerly passed sentence of death on forgers, and more than one of them had perished by the gibbet, when suddenly the public conscience was alarmed. A jury no longer brought in a verdict of guilty; witnesses would no longer come forward; and the victims would sooner put up with a heavy loss than be implicated in a punishment which they regarded as too rigorous. The result was that justice, thus armed with too severe a

penalty, passed over the head of the criminal without striking him. This movement deserves mentioning, for it shows in what way the laws fall into desuetude or are modified in England, which are behind public opinion. The very arts interfered, and pleaded in this affair the cause of humanity. George Cruikshank, an artist of merit, who has taken up a special line between caricature and philosophic painting, launched at this period a humorous engraving about the pitiless rigour with which this sort of offences was punished. The arguments employed against the penalty of death for forgery acquired fresh strength from Cruikshank's sharp sketch. A petition was drawn up against this rigorous penalty: with what signatures was it covered? It was supported by the bankers and great merchants, who had lost all confidence in the severity of the law. At last a bill was brought in by Sir R. Peel in 1830 to abolish the capital punishment in certain cases; this bill was first rejected, but passed the House of Lords in 1832. England thus accomplished, by the mere force of public opinion, a reform which only took place in France in the same year as the result of a glorious Revolution.

I saw in the archives of the Bank of England some of these notes counterfeited at different periods, and which are kept as more or less curious specimens of an illegitimate art. One of

them, I regret to say, was made by a pen in 1809 by the French prisoners of war at Chatham; their excuse doubtless was that they were in an enemy's country. Another note, executed in the same manner, was the work of a schoolmaster, who was hung for abusing his skill in writing. It seems as if there are certain innate and incurable propensities in some forgers: a woman who had been transported for forgery returned from Australia to England after obtaining a pardon, on February 13, 1813. Well! on the 25th of the same month, she was sent back to prison for a new forged note which figures in the same series of illustrations.

When we carefully examine these counterfeits, and compare them with the real bank-notes, we at once perceive that paper-money is principally defended against fraud by the purity of the graver and the excellence of the execution. In order to reproduce exactly the vignette of Britannia, the talent of a skilful engraver would be needed; and, thank Heaven! any artist who enjoys a reputation would refuse to produce a masterpiece which would lead him sooner or later to Newgate. The forgers, reduced in this case to their own resources, content themselves with imitating as well as they can, but always in a very coarse manner, the general features of the pattern. Hence it comes that forged notes do not resist an attentive examination; there are even experienced men who, it is said, recognise a forgery with their

eyes shut as it were: they only need to pass their fingers over the face of the note to recognize the quality of the ink and the paper. Unfortunately, this last method of diagnostics was a short time back exposed to a rude trial. Some reams of paper of the same sort as the Bank uses for its notes, were stolen at the fountain-head, or Laverstoke mills, by the aid of a workman who was seduced: it is easy to imagine for what purpose. The news of this robbery spread an alarm, a few months back, through the City: how could a forgery be now detected when committed on authentic Bank paper. Fortunately, the robbery was not so extensive as had been at first apprehended, and the manœuvres of the forgers were foiled by the vigilance of the English police. One of them who seems to be a worthy type of the "*causes célèbres*," occupied a small farm in the neighbourhood of Birmingham; but the peaceful and honest labours of agriculture had been purposely selected as a veil the better to cover dark machinations. It was at this farm in fact that the principal apparatus of the forgers was seized. The court has passed a severe sentence upon four of them.

Counterfeiting is an art against which the Bank has naturally taken every sort of precaution and administrative defence. On an average more than one forged note is presented at its counter every day. At the beginning, the fraud

was able at intervals to defy the cleverest surveillance of the clerks: at the present day it is impossible for a false note to pass without discovery through all the minute trials to which it is subjected on its entrance. What are these trials? After being verified with great care, the notes pass through the hands of clerks who tear off the signature. My readers must learn that every note returned to the Bank will never see the light of circulation again: we may say that it has lived, *vixit*. A first rent is not sufficient: the note is fated to undergo, soon after, a second and more thorough one, which removes the amount placed on the left-hand corner of the piece of paper: this last laceration is performed by the hands of other clerks. On the road, the notes, while being more and more examined, are in addition marked with a red stamp which, by means of certain relations with the order of current facts, would enable a Bank clerk to decide in a few moments when or by whom these notes were paid. Up to the present the defaced paper is stamped by hand and with marvellous celerity; but I saw in the office the model of a machine which will do the work now entrusted to a clerk's hand with even more promptitude and regularity. Other young men, mostly sons of the officials, are engaged in the same room in posting up the journals and ledgers. Each note, on its return, is registered in both these books, so that by com-

paring the number of notes cashed with that of the notes not yet in, the Bank knows exactly at the end of the day, what is the floating amount of its paper in circulation.

How many notes generally come back daily? On October 16, 1862, I visited this department of the Bank, and on that day 56,785 notes had been received, representing altogether a value of 2,091,755*l*. It requires four days' work before each of these defaced notes has passed through the series of formalities which in the first instance control it and then annul it as paper-money. Lastly, after being sorted, separated by order of date and value, and formed into parcels varying from 300 to 1500, they are sent into a library, where the management preserves them in boxes for ten years. During the whole of that time, it is possible to refer to the genealogy of each dead note, and determine the circumstances of its issue and payment, provided that the person interested in the search merely indicates the number, date, and amount. Such an inquiry, which only takes a few minutes, will doubtless appear a trick, when my readers learn that there are in this library 16,000 boxes, altogether containing as many as eighty million old bank-notes, whose value only figures as a reminiscence! At the end of ten years, these notes, which have solely been preserved for the sake of the public, are burnt in the interior of the Bank; I say, for the sake of

the public, for it is solely to facilitate inquiries and claims from without that the management undertakes the expense of such a service. For the Bank, the note has ceased to exist from the moment when it was cashed.

Notes presented by bankers are placed to their account, and form part of the general movement of debit and credit, which is here designated by the name of balance; but notes offered by private persons are all cashed in the Pay-hall, that old hall, open to every comer, where you can receive as you please, either new notes, or gold, or silver, according to the department to which you apply.

There was certainly a period in the history of Great Britain, when the Bank of England suspended the payment of its notes: it was from 1797 to 1821. At first the alarm was great; but the commerce of London soon accepted the measure as patriotic. It must not be forgotten that all the resources of Great Britain were at that time arrayed against the ambitious projects of Napoleon. This lengthened disappearance of currency was, however, an undeniable testimony of public confidence in the good faith of the Bank of England and the patience of a great people when menaced. Gold had reappeared when the famous panic of 1825 occurred. This year was celebrated for what the English call bubbles, that is to say chimerical projects and enterprises. The wildness of speculation had been urged to its last

limits.* The consequences of these illusions in money matters were soon declared; and it was the Bank of England that chiefly endured them. It saw its counters daily besieged from morning till night by a numerous and terrified population that demanded payment of the bank-notes. At the same time everybody was desirous to get bills discounted. The Bank combated fear by firmness and confidence in itself. Like Wellington at Waterloo, who resolved to hold out till the last man, it swore to hold out till its last sovereign. Still gold was slipping away from its cellars: in a single day it had cashed 4,200 notes. Bags containing 1000 sovereigns only appeared for a moment to disappear again in the Bank drawers. They were beginning to tremble when one of the directors accidentally discovered a box containing from six to seven thousand one-pound notes, all ready for issue. Such a circumstance attracted the attention of the Bank authorities, and they asked permission of Government to issue this paper-money, which had not been current in England for some time past. From the date of this measure, the situation became relaxed, and the Bank remained upright, having even strengthened its credit during the tempest.

* One of the schemes of 1825 will give an idea of the marvellous state to which the spirit of enterprise then rose: a company threatened formation to drain one of the arms of the Red Sea, and recover the treasures lost by the Egyptians swallowed up at the moment when they were pursuing the Israelites.

The governor of that day stuck bravely to his post; and I was allowed to read a sentence in his handwriting, which I should be sorry to pass over in silence, for I find in it such a thorough trait of the British character: "I did not see my children during the whole of that week."

At the present day the Bank of England enjoys a very flourishing situation; but it is worth knowing on what it counts to overrule contrary eventualities. Its capital is $14\frac{1}{2}$ millions on which it pays a dividend; it has also 3 millions which pay nothing to anybody. In other words, it possesses $17\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and pays a dividend on $14\frac{1}{2}$. These three millions form its reserve, its citadel; and it is behind such an entrenchment that it hopes to fight against the unexpected attacks of fortune, whatever may occur. Up to 1832, payments were made by hand; the largest amount which twenty clerks could distribute in this way, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. was about 50,000*l.* in gold. As this method no longer satisfied the requirements of the Bank at certain moments of pressure, the plan was invented of placing twenty-five sovereigns in one scale and twenty-five in the other, and then increasing both till they reached two hundred. In this way gold is no longer counted, but weighed. Through this new practice a thousand sovereigns can be paid in a few minutes.

By the side of the great pay-hall, there is a

private room, the weighing-room, in which sovereigns and half-sovereigns are subjected to a different sort of weighing. We find here those famous balances invented by Mr. Cotton, an ex-governor of the Bank, which we saw in operation at the Mint. The gold coins may have lost the legal weight in circulation: such is the question which these infallible machines now decide. The sovereigns sentenced by them as too light, that is to say, as worn by friction, are at once condemned to disappear: they are passed on at once to another machine which defaces five hundred gold coins in a minute, or from sixty to seventy thousand in a working day. As nearly all the gold in Great Britain reaches the Bank at one moment or the other, it is easy to understand the happy influence which such a control exercises over the currency of the realm by keeping it up to the legal standard.

The Bank of England pays the Government 120,000*l.* a-year for the privilege of issuing paper-money. The profit it derives from this privilege annually may be estimated at 100,000*l.* a year; and yet it gains nothing on five-pound notes: its profits begin at a higher scale; and in addition it only realizes a profit on the $14\frac{1}{2}$ millions which are represented by gold in its cellars. One of its sources of gain in the transactions of this department must be the number of bank-notes, more or less large, destroyed by various events, such as

fires and shipwrecks. We have seen how in certain cases, the value of a lost or damaged note may be recovered: I will only mention two instances. A miser who lived in great retirement in a remote part of London was rather anxious about his treasure. As he never had a fire, even in winter, in his parlour, he hid a bundle of bank-notes in the fire-place, under the sticks and coal which seemed all prepared for one of the most common domestic habits in England. What robber would ever have thought of examining this hiding-place? One day, however,—it must have been Christmas-day—his daughter thought proper to illumine the habitual sadness of the extinct hearth by a little fire, contrary to her father's orders. She put a match to the old scraps of newspapers by which the lower bars were obstructed. At this moment the miser, who had overheard the rubbing of the match on the sand-paper, rushed in in great alarm. He was too late to save the notes entirely, but he had still time to collect the blazing sticks. At the risk of burning his fingers he drew from the fire-place the scorched fragments of the bank-notes whose numbers he had luckily taken down; and he was thus enabled to establish their authenticity by the Bank books. The declarations of accidental losses are about 600 a-year, and average an amount of 16,000*l.*

Another and even more singular fact is connected with the earlier period of the Institution.

In 1740, one of the Bank directors, who had bought an estate in the country, asked for a bank-note for 30,000*l.* in exchange for the same amount which he paid in. On returning home, he carelessly threw the flimsy paper on to the marble chimney-piece, and at the very moment was called into an adjoining room on important business. On returning to his own room, what was his surprise at not finding his note there. No one had entered it: so whom could he suspect? It was eventually supposed that a draught of air had carried the note into the fire. The directors recounted his misadventure to the other heads of the Bank: as he was an honourable man, and his word was as good as gold, they gave him a second note, upon his written promise to repay the 30,000*l.*, should the first note ever be presented. The director died, and his fortune had been divided among his heirs, when, thirty years later, a stranger came to demand payment of the note which was supposed to be lost. The Bank paid, and made an appeal to the good faith of the heirs; but they repulsed every request for restitution. It was eventually discovered that the house of the ex-director was bought after his death by an architect, who began to pull it down, and the note was found in a crack in the mantel-piece.

The issue of bank-notes constitutes one of the most extensive and active departments of the

Bank; but who has not heard of the debt of Great Britain? This formidable debt now amounts to 780,119,722*l.*; and it requires all the resources of a prodigiously rich nation to find the interest every six months. The latter service devolves on the Bank; for with the English the hand of the State is never displayed, not even when it pays.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STOCKS—THE EXCHANGE—TRADE IN THE PUBLIC FUNDS—THE BEARS AND THE BULLS—PAYMENT OF DIVIDENDS—SCENE AT THE BANK DURING THE FIRST DAYS — FUND-HOLDERS—ANNUITANTS, MALE AND FEMALE — EFFECTS OF THE PAYMENT OF THE DIVIDENDS UPON TRADE — THE ABSENT—HOW THEY RECEIVE THEIR MONEY.

THE origin of the National Debt dates back to Charles II. This king had contracted a loan, whose principal was never repaid. This loan was eventually received by George III. into the burdens of the kingdom. It would be superfluous to follow through its various stages the incredible progress of the public debt in England. Everybody knows that it was more than doubled, half a century ago, by the gigantic efforts made by England to oppose the invasions of the first Empire. Some economists, doubtless struck by the enormous burden which old victories, and above all the last struggle, laid on coming generations, have with some degree of temper reproached Great Britain with throwing her money

into the sea. It was in truth to maintain and augment its power on the seas that the English nation chiefly imposed such sacrifices on itself; but as the sea was its bulwark, and as it owed to these losses the salvation of its liberties and territory, there is money in the world which has been expended much more badly than that.

However this may be, the loan Acts passed on several occasions by the House of Commons stipulated from the outset that so long as the Bank of England continued to exist as a corporation, books should be kept open in its offices to receive the names of the state creditors. At the beginning of one of these loans the subscribers receive from the cashier, in return for their money, a certificate bearing their name, residence, and quality. This certificate, which remains in the hands of the Bank, is next registered in a journal, then in a ledger, and then it is that it becomes what the English call stock. The character of the stocks is being transferable at will. Any one whose name is inscribed in the Bank books can sell the whole or a portion of his claim, or, to speak more correctly, of his inscription.

Where is this trade in the public funds carried on? In Bartholomew Lane, opposite the eastern gate of the Bank. Here stands Capel Court, once on a time the residence of Sir William

Capel, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1504. A species of portico leads through an open alley to a building of paltry appearance, the entrance to which is strictly guarded by a man in livery; it is the Stock Exchange. The profane, that is to say, all those who do not belong to the fraternity of subscribers and their clerks, are rigorously excluded from the gates of the temple. If, however, through the recommendation of one of the initiated, you succeed in getting in, you find yourself in a large hall, open to men of business since 1802. This hall, supported by a double row of columns, surrounded at their base by a wooden bank, resembles every Exchange in the world as regards noise and confusion of tongues. In the midst of the tumult and perpetual movement you distinguish in this busy crowd two varieties of characters—the stock-jobbers and the stock-brokers. The stock-jobbers perform the part which has fallen in France on the *agens de change*; they fix and determine among themselves the course of the public funds. The brokers act as intermediaries between the jobber and the purchaser of stock; they also offer a security to the Bank, and help it to prevent fraud by proving the identity of the persons between whom the transactions are concluded. These high priests of the money world generally have their office or sanctuary in the vicinity on the ground-floor of narrow and winding streets,

or at the end of small courts and obscure alleys. They are distinguished by a correct and almost uniform attire, scanty whiskers, a forehead usually prematurely bald, and an air of reflection, which does not exclude, however, an electric promptitude in their actions and measures.

The Stock Exchange is regarded by some moralists as a den of speculation. What earned it this bad reputation is the frequently equivocal character of the time bargains. Here the players—for this order of transactions constitutes real gambling—are divided into bears and bulls. The bears are those who speculate on a fall; they have the reputation of seeing everything in gloomy colours, and nourishing themselves on public calamities. The bulls, on the other hand, back a rise, and things present themselves to them so rosy coloured as to become nearly red. The latter subdivide themselves into two classes in the natural history of the Stock Exchange: we find weak bulls and strong bulls. The weak bulls are those who may have an eminent degree of ardour and business courage; but as they possess no money, they are obliged to seek support from the strong bulls in order to send the market up. Without dwelling further on the gambling combinations, I will assume that a person has sold to another his money in the funds by the intervention of the stock-broker. He must now regularize the transfer, and this last

formality brings us back to the stock offices of the Bank.

These offices, so many large halls, which generally receive light through a glass roof, and which bear some resemblance to churches, are principally distinguished by a voluminous collection of large registers known in business by the name of transfer books. I was allowed to consult these venerable tomes, which represent so important a branch of the public fortune in England. The most surprising thing is the order and simplicity of the operation, especially if we reflect on the extent of the transactions. One half of the public debt changes hands on different occasions. In one day as many as two thousand five hundred transfers have been made, but the average is five hundred. A fact which adds greatly to the complication of these movements is that each stockholder is able to sell a part, and even a very small part of his inscription. There is scarce a limit to the subdivision and breaking up of these credits on the state. I am in error, there is one; no one can open an account *for less than one penny*.

Very few, it is true, take advantage of the extreme latitude allowed in this respect to the negotiation of funds. Still there are persons who have only two or three pounds in the funds, and it must be confessed that it would be difficult to become a fundholder at less expense. The number

of persons interested in the funds was in 1859 268,990; but nothing prevents that number from being doubled in a few years.

It would be rash to attempt to specify all the purposes to which purchases in the funds are applied. With many it is an investment like any other, though much more sure; sometimes, too, it is a present which a saving and prudent merchant makes to one of his daughters on her birthday. The same means have been also employed to secure a sum of money without notoriety to an illegitimate child. This form of gift, which has the merit of avoiding in such a case the scandal of legal documents, only offers one inconvenience—if the child die, capital and interest die with it. Whatever, besides, may be the innumerable eventualities to which the purchase and sale of funds lend themselves, it is easy to convince oneself that the majority of the transactions deals with small amounts.

Why are funds purchased except to receive the dividends on them? Hence the payment of these forms one of the most essential branches connected with the management of the national debt. The dividends of all the English stocks are paid twice a year, either in January and July, or in April and October. I suppose the happy day arrived: the stockholder proceeds to a large hall, in which the letters of the alphabet, painted in black ink, stand out vigorously in the wall. The

letter corresponding to the first of his name points out to him at once the desk of the clerk to whom he must apply. On arriving there he mentions his name; for, as I have said, the Bank of England never grants any certificate to bearer: the only security is in the inscription in the stock-ledger. This book is opened, and by the use of only two letters the clerk finds at once, with a marvellous facility, the name and the amount prepared before, with the income-tax deducted. All that is demanded of the claimant is that the signature is given. It has been found that this is the best proof of identity. This done, he receives a cheque. Provided with this precious document, he passes into an adjoining hall called the Rotunda, which naturally owes its name to the circular form the architect has given it. The centre of this rotunda is occupied by a vast office; also round, under a glass dome, and inside it are some fifty clerks. These clerks receive the cheques, and cash them one after the other with extraordinary rapidity. The crowd is sometimes very considerable, especially toward midday: during the first week that follows the opening, it varies between eight and ten thousand persons a day. In such a case a clerk has been known to pay six hundred and fifty cheques between 9 A.M. and 3 P.M.

The character of this population forms an interesting study: it belongs in the great majority

to the middle-class, and even to what we should call in France the small *bourgeoisie.** The State creditors are generally distinguished by a respectable air, modest dress and reserved manners. The women are at least as numerous as the men; among them, widows are easily recognised by their black dress and a peculiarly-shaped cap, which they wear under their bonnet, a custom so universal in England, that the Queen would not depart from it; and the English love her even more in this simple bandeau of gauffered muslin than in the crown. Some of these widows still have rosy cheeks, the plumpness of youth, and that quick glance which does not announce an eternal mourning; their quality as fundholder might besides easily attract a consoler to them; others, on the contrary, thin, yellow, and worn by care and sorrow, glide like shadows into the crowd, receive some small sum, sixteen or seven-

* I am indebted to the kindness of one of the Bank officials for the following table, which gives an exact idea of the distribution of the funds in England:

Of 268,995 Stockholders:

92,206	receive a dividend of				£10
43,287	„	„	£10	to	20
89,601	„	„	20	„	100
25,008	„	„	100	„	200
13,012	„	„	200	„	400
3,742	„	„	400	„	600
2,421	„	„	600	„	1000
1,138	„	„	1000	„	2000
354	„	„	2000	„	4000
227	receive above				4000

teen shillings, and disappear. Some old dames bring their daughter with them, as if to let her share a moment of joy. The English, and it must necessarily be so, are the only people who have understood the poetry of money, and have, as it were, imparted a feeling to crown pieces. Beneath these dividends received, there are in fact all the sympathies of the family: the recollection of an ancestor; the consolation of assisting a sister or brother in want. All this spreads a beam of sunshine over the faces, especially at the moment when the blessed cheque is delivered.

As many of the venerable matrons arrived with large black leathern bags under their arm, I expected that they were about to be filled with gold and silver! In this at any rate my hopes were disappointed: their account was generally reduced to a few pounds, which they were careful not to bury in these vast receptacles. Some of them retreated to one of the benches that occupy a corner of the Rotunda, and there concealed their money in one of the most artful hiding-places in their faded attire. This precaution is not unnecessary: the glistening of the gold attracts thieves, and the detectives watch in the hall that the money may not leave the pockets at the moment of entering it. Among the fundholders are many who come a long distance; they can be at once recognized by their rustic garb, their thick shoes, and the

stick they hold in their hand. Pilgrims of a new genus, they readily visit Threadneedle Street once or twice a-year. The sight of the national creditors makes one eagerly think of miraculous chapels and fountains. There are among them sick persons, lame, paralytics and infirm people, and decrepit old men with glassy eyes. I will not affirm that this piscina of gold cures them, but it at any rate helps them to support the sufferings of life.

The period when the dividends are paid has a lucky influence on the trade of London. It is not in vain that the shops in the City and West-end display at that period so many seductions before the eyes of persons who have just received their dividends. Moreover, many of the fundholders, both male and female, come from the country, and that is a further reason to take back some *souvenir* of the metropolis. Who has not heard say that articles of dress are cheaper in large towns than in villages? Is there not a much larger choice in the London shops, those real temples of merchandize, than in the paltry provincial shops? These considerations and many others invite an untying of the purse-strings. On the other hand, the seven or eight millions required to pay the interest of the National Debt are so much withdrawn from business, which may at the time suffer a temporary depression; but no one need feel alarmed at that; this mass of coin evaporates

in a moment in drops of rain, or if you prefer it, in drops of gold; and at the end of three or four weeks it returns by a thousand conduits and inevitable currents to the great reservoirs of the public fortune.

Up to this moment we have only dwelt on the stockholders who come themselves to receive their dividends; there are many others who do not put themselves out of the way for that, and who, retained in the country, are represented by what is called a power of attorney. This is not an instance in which to say that the absent are in the wrong; for, on the contrary, they are attended to before the others. The two first days after dividends become due are devoted to the delivery of these orders, which are deposited by country stockholders in the hands of their bankers or London agent. The news is sent off by the night's post, so that 180,000 British stockholders can either receive their money on the same day, or at least learn that another has received it for them. I pass over many other details referring to the question of the public debt; it will be sufficient to say, in order to give an idea of the extent of the work done, that ten rooms are devoted to them, that they employ 400 persons, and fill with writing upwards of 117 registers, the true Sybilline books of modern civilization. The Bank receives for this service 190,000*l.* a-year, at the rate of 300*l.* for the first 600 millions of the debt, and

150*l.* for the rest. The peculiarity in this case is an independent administration doing the Government business, which places itself as a connecting link between the nation and the representative powers, and thus draws confidence closer on both sides. What other regime but that of liberty could thus lay the hand of the State in that of the Nation?

Not content with keeping the current stock accounts with rigorous exactness, the Bank of England attaches a great importance to the preservation of all the archives of the National Debt. A narrow winding stone staircase brought me to the stock-office library, whose entrance is guarded by an iron gate, and to which the public are not admitted. It is a building of five stories, crowned with a glass roof, but the stories are only marked by a balustrade. The centre is perfectly empty, and the light falls from the ceiling to the floor without encountering any obstacle. The walls are covered all the way up with more than one hundred thousand large volumes. These books contain all the transactions and documents relating to the public funds since August 23rd, 1694, the period of the formation of the Bank. By the aid of these registers, which are arranged in systematic order, it is possible to refer to all government loans, trace to some extent the genealogy of British stock-holders from the founding of the establishment to the present day,

and re-establish the titles of all those who ever held any public stock.

At the moment when I entered I found myself facing a gentleman who was quietly engaged in painting a picture; this artist was the librarian. Several other pictures, chiefly landscapes, were thrown into a heap in a corner of the library which he had converted into a studio. He had the kindness to initiate me into the mysteries of his department. These old books contain a vast and interesting collection of autographs, for the most remarkable men of every age have liked to hold stock. The great composer, George Frederick Handel, for instance, had two accounts in the funds, one of which exceeded 15,000*l*. In the midst of the Bank books, which are modestly covered with vellum, stand out splendidly the books of the old East India Company, which, with their gilt morocco binding, to some extent reflect the pride and wealth of that sumptuous commercial company. Surrounded by these grave volumes and his pictures, this librarian, who is a gentleman of wit and taste, would have appeared to me perfectly happy could he but have warmed himself; but too great a value is attached, and justly so, to the preservation of these unique documents to allow a fire to be lighted in the library during the winter. The English are philosophers, and the librarian of the stock office tried to prove to me by very decent argu-

ments that artificial heat was detrimental to the health.

The payment of the interest of the National Debt is not the only link existing between the Bank and the Government. It also receives on account of the Treasury all the revenues of the kingdom in the shape of excise, taxes, stamps, postage, and customs dues, &c. Every shilling received in the heart of Wales, on the Cornish coast, no matter where, at once finds its way to Threadneedle Street, and thus helps to meet the daily demands that besiege the State. It must not be supposed, however, that money, in order to effect this, is obliged to travel from north to south, from south to north. Among all these transmissions probably not a single sovereign changes its place. Very considerable sums are paid over by virtue of the most simple arrangements. I will suppose that a Government collector has to send 50,000*l.* from Liverpool to London; on the same day there is an individual who wants to despatch 50,000*l.* from London to Liverpool by the agency of the Bank of England or its eleven branches. The two transactions are at once carried out by a few lines written in a book and an advice note sent by post. The public revenue deposited in the hands of the Bank of England amounts in ordinary times to one million a week. At the same time as it receives, the Bank also pays on account of Govern-

ment, keeps books open with all the public services, pays all cheques drawn on it by the Treasury, and fills the different state cash-boxes, when necessary, with its gold and silver. This last series of operations leads us to the third department of the institution — the banking offices.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ENGLISH BANKING SYSTEM—LONDON AND PROVINCIAL BANKS —PUBLIC DRAWING-OFFICE—PRIVATE DRAWING-OFFICE— BILL-OFFICE—THE CLEARING-HOUSE—THE COUNCIL—THE DIRECTORS—THE CLERKS—THE LADY IN BLACK.

THE banking offices occupy in one of the yards a separate wing running round the old churchyard of St. Christopher-le-Stocks, now converted into a garden. As regards banking operations, the institution in Threadneedle Street cannot boast of being the only one that carries them on. Any one who has walked through the streets of London must have been struck by the extraordinary development which joint-stock banks and private banking establishments have assumed among the English. These houses, of which I have counted as many as seventy-four in London, are distinguished externally by a more or less architectural style. After passing through double mahogany framed glass doors, you find yourself in a large ground-floor room, the bare white walls

of which are only relieved by a clock in the shape of a watch. All along the room runs a counter also made of mahogany; for the English employ this wood, which is rather scarce among us, in a manner that trenches on prodigality. Behind these counters stand at regular distances at a desk covered with books, pens, and ink, clerks who are quite ready to receive your cheque, should you be lucky enough to have one to present to them. This cheque is an order for payment drawn on the bank by some one who has a current account there. The clerk invariably asks whether you wish to be paid in notes or gold. When the sovereigns have been counted, they are collected in a copper scoop, and then thrown across the counter in the direction of the person to be paid. Handing gold in scoopsful is, however, no vain ostentation on the part of these banks, for many of them are enormously rich. In 1858 the amount of deposits in the joint-stock banks exceeded forty-four millions: there were also fifty other banks, some of which had a very extensive range of business.

It is not in London alone that such establishments are met with. There is hardly a town or even a village in England which has not at least one bank. Some of these provincial banks affect at the present day airs of luxury and sumptuousness; but the oldest of them prospered for a long time in obscure nooks. When I was visiting, in

1859, a manufacturing town in the West, I was shown, in a narrow dirty street, a small grocer's shop, whose dirty windows, dilapidated front, and paltry show, indicated a trade in a state of distress; but for all that one of the most important banks in the country was kept in the back shop, behind the sugar loaves and Cheshire cheeses. The banker himself was a little man in breeches, with low shoes, a shabby grey coat, and an old light wig.

The immense development of banks in England has emanated from the principle of the division of labour. Every man enriched by the arts, trade, or commerce, finds it an advantage and saving of time to intrust a part of his capital to other men, who make a study and practice of the science of money. This principle has been strengthened throughout the whole of Great Britain by custom, and sometimes even by reasons of social consideration. Paying in cash is not *bon ton*. An English shopkeeper, who was asked one day what was the difference between a man and a gentleman, replied without hesitation, "A man is one who comes to buy my goods and pays cash. A gentleman is one to whom I give credit, and who settles my account every six months by a cheque." Heaven guard me from finding that this definition embraces all the relations of life; but we must give it due value in the matter we are now discussing. Having a banker is a sign of respectability.

The richest persons hardly ever keep more money in their house than they require for their immediate purposes. They have a book from which they detach a slip whenever they want to make a payment. On this slip, which is covered with printed characters, bearing the banker's name and the ordinary formula of an order at sight, they write their signature and the amount to be paid. But it is in commercial matters that banks render very important services. Money is of itself unproductive, and the whole of society is interested in keeping it in circulation. The bankers, as themselves confess, do not create capital, they can only add to it; but they distribute the symbol of that capital, and by distributing, they fertilize work in every shape, favour the daily transactions between man and man, and facilitate the purchase of merchandize, at times even without undoing their purses. Is it necessary to dwell on the well-known advantages of a system which envelops in England all classes of society as if in a vast network? There is, however, one fact I must mention. The banks have not only rendered the circulation of money more effective in England, but they have also developed the value of honesty. In the eyes of the banker, the morality of his customers is a capital. It is, in fact, to his interest to take into account the character of those with whom he deals. There has been in England more than

one instance of persons who have risen from obscurity to a social position through the confidence with which they inspired their banker. It is not merely by opening an account and discounting bills that the latter can help his customer. The favourable opinion of a banker notably facilitates the relations of any active man who really deserves support.

The Bank of England carries on the operations known by the name of banking in three large open halls, leading from one to the other, and only separated by a curtain or a barrier. The first is the public Drawing-office; the second is the private Drawing-office devoted to the affairs of individuals, and lastly comes the Bill-office.

Into the public Drawing-office pour all the revenues of the nation, running like so many streams from the different Government departments, such as the Treasury, the Custom House, Post-Office, Office of Inland Revenue, &c. Distinct accounts are opened in the Bank books for each of these departments of the State. As the revenues enter, cheques are drawn upon the ever-swelling fund to pay the salaries of the Government officials and other outgoings. The surplus is passed to the credit of the general exchequer, and is applied, when the moment arrives, in paying the interest of the National Debt twice a year.

The private Drawing-office, which occupies

more than thrice the space of the other halls, is subdivided into two sections, one set aside for the transactions with bankers, the other for those with merchants and private customers. This latter branch of business is represented by a counter, divided into sections corresponding with the letters of the alphabet. It is the principle of English banks that money which is not immediately wanted by the owner, should pass through this channel into the hands of another person who can make it fructify. The two great operations consist in receiving and paying. The Bank receives the money of private persons in the shape of deposits. Any person introduced by respectable friends can open an account at the Bank of England, provided that the conditions are considered sufficiently advantageous. From this moment the Bank renders every sort of service to its customers. It sells and buys for them, receives their dividends, makes their payments in nearly every part of the world, and in a word guards their interest on the same principle as it applies to the management of the State revenues. At every moment cheques drawn by depositors are presented to the clerks. The chief duty of the latter is to examine the account of each customer in the books, and to assure themselves properly, under the penalty of a fine, that the balance between the deposit and the drawings is not broken. As this series of operations is the

same in all banks, I did not stop to watch it; but in the same hall there is, as we have seen, another division entirely devoted to the accounts current between the Bank of England and the bankers, and this offers a very peculiar interest.

Formerly the bankers' clerks were accustomed to meet in London at a public-house. Here, while drinking a glass of beer, they would open their pocket-books and, in order to save time and trouble, exchange cheques on the different London houses. This circumstance suggested the idea of concentrating such transactions, for the advantage of the bankers themselves, in a regular establishment; and from this idea sprang in 1770 the Clearing-house. This house stands in Lombard Street, at the corner of a court, and behind an insurance-office. The interior, which is very little known even by the English themselves, consists of a large hall with desks, on which are written the names of the bankers in alphabetical order. Hither every London banker sends twice a day one of his clerks intrusted with all the bills and drafts payable in London which he may have received from his clients. In a second, and in the midst of a serious tumult, which might be called the tumult of business, the securities have passed from one pocket-book to another, and they to some extent annihilate each other in this exchange movement. Thus in 1839, a mass of accounts, amounting to 954 millions, was settled

by a total payment of 66,475*l.* in bank-notes. Such was the state of things when a fresh saving of time and money was introduced about 1856 into the Clearing-house arrangements. It was decided by the London bankers that in future the balance of all accounts between one house and another should be closed every evening by simple cheques drawn on the Bank of England. These credit or debit cheques reach the Drawing-office of the Bank at about 3 P.M., when they are entered in a book to the name of each banker. The very natural result of such an arrangement is that more than a million may be liquidated in a day without a penny having been paid in cash. Doing without money while carrying on large monetary transactions is the ideal to which the practical science of the English tends, and in this matter it has realized wonders. It has been calculated that, since the introduction of the clearing system, three millions have been withdrawn from circulation, as no longer wanted.

We see by this the extent and importance of the relations of the Bank of England with the joint-stock banks and the other bankers. When a draft, no matter of what value, has been received in the public or private Drawing-office, it is at once sent to the Bill-office. This department contains several distinct branches: a first section in which bills belonging to Bank customers or the Bank itself are sorted and arranged so that

there may be no mistake about their presentation when they fall due; next, the Bank Post Bill-office where you can procure in exchange for cash bills payable at seven days' date, the Bank being responsible for payment, when they arrive at maturity; and lastly the Discount-office. In France the average of the bills discounted by the Banque is 40*l.*; in England, this average varies between 300*l.* and 400*l.*, thus showing the difference of credit between the two nations. Any person who carries on a respectable business in London, and who offers a sufficient security, can open a discount account with the Bank, if recommended by one of the directors or of the two governors. From this moment, he enjoys the privilege of sending bills daily to the Bank for discount; the value or quality of these bills, however, is submitted to the approbation of the committee. The rate of discount varies, and follows the natural upward and downward tendency which regulates all securities in the market. It has more than once occurred that a sudden elevation of the currency has followed a very low rate of interest, which is the inevitable result of a large amount of unemployed capital. In this case, as M. Forcade so well explained in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the relation existing between the metallic reserve and the reserve of bills "marks the rate of interest as a watch marks the hour." A rise in the rate of discount

is at the same time supposed to act as a check on the demand for money; this check, it is but right to say, is sometimes powerless; it may even possibly have, at least at the beginning, an effect quite opposite to what was expected: the Bank in that case is obliged to fall back on its vast resources, feeling very certain, however, that on the return of public capital and confidence, the balance will be speedily re-established.

The Bill-office, or third division of the banking department has a rather large body of sorters and out-tellers added to the usual staff of cashiers and book-keepers. One of the corners of the hall was pointed out to me as being the head-quarters for the issue and payment of all the Bank post-bills, which circulate not only in England, but in India and all the other colonies of Great Britain, as well as on the Continent and in the United States. When we reflect that all the financial and commercial transactions of the kingdom—we might even say of the whole world—are represented in these three offices of one department: when we think of the centripetal force which sends money forth, and brings it back to this great focus of commercial life, we are struck by a feeling of wonder and admiration. The banking department is placed under the management of an intelligent and practical man, Mr. Miller, who is fond of calling it "his baby," because he has really developed with a species of paternal affec-

tion the mind and organs of this former administrative embryo. The accounts of the three branches, the public and private Drawing-office and the Bill-office, are subjected to the same balancing system. This balance must be struck before the close of each day with a rigorous exactness. If there be the slightest error, no clerk is allowed to rest or leave his seat, till it be discovered, even if it be only the difference of a penny. It is extraordinary to see with what regularity, promptitude, and silence this frightful mass of business is despatched.

The Bank of England is an admirable mechanism, the chief wheels of which we have seen at work. In the lower regions a strict division of labour reigns with thoroughly English power; but in proportion as we rise to the higher spheres, we discover unity. The supreme direction of the Bank resides in the Governor, Deputy-Governor, and Court of Directors. This court is composed of twenty-four members, eight of whom annually go out in rotation: their place is filled up by eight others appointed by a meeting of shareholders who have 500*l.* invested in the Bank of England. At least such is the principle; but in fact the Court of Directors draws up a list of names, which is then submitted to the pure and simple approval of the shareholders. One of the advantages of this system is to break up the elements of a clique or coterie, in the event of an

attempt being made to form one. Personal influences have no time to take root; and as no one can say a year beforehand who his successor will be, the management will never fall into the hands of any party, or ever hoist the flag of any Utopia. The election of the Governor and his deputy is entirely in the hands of the Court: it is what we should call in France an election in the second degree. Political considerations as well as Government influence are entirely banished from it; and the Governor himself is only appointed for a year: he may be re-elected the following year, but then the duration of his magistracy ends. He represents the executive power: the legislative dwells in the Council. The court-room, in which the Council meet every Thursday, is a noble apartment built by Robert Taylor, with a row of lofty Venetian windows looking south on the Bank garden. Three large white marble mantelpieces, columns or pillars painted to imitate verd-antique; eight medallions fixed in the walls, and representing the eight reigns that have passed since the foundation of the Bank of England; mahogany doors; furniture in good style; antique arm-chairs with leathern backs; a long table covered with a blue cloth, on which is laid a wooden hammer, as the symbol of the presidency:—such is the general appearance of this court-room, in which the two Governors and twenty-four Directors of the greatest Bank in the

world meet once a week. All questions are decided by a majority of the Court.

There is another room, the Committee-room, in which the daily affairs are managed by three directors, who relieve each other weekly. Although only the members of this Committee are bound to be present, many other directors go nearly daily to the establishment when not on duty, and all are sure of knowing, in one way or another, what is going on. If it be not absolutely by dinners that men are governed, they are at least often collected round a table. The present governor of the Bank, Mr. A. Latham, was kind enough to show me, on the road, one of the centres of attraction which collect most of the directors about mid-day, whether they are on duty or not,—it is a private room, with an excellent lunch served up.

If the Bank is very particular in letting its affairs be constantly known to the directors, it does not at all fear having its situation judged by the public. Believing that the best form of government is that which has its windows and doors open, it readily allows the light and the eyes of the curious to penetrate into its affairs. The returns of the Bank of England are published every week; while the balance of the Bank of France is only proclaimed once a month. What foreigner, too, has not been surprised at the facility with which access is afforded him to the

various offices in Threadneedle Street?. What a contrast does this liberty offer with the mysterious and impenetrable character of the French departments!

The Bank of England commenced with 54 assistants: it now employs 770 clerks,—or, including the branches, 928,—to whom the porters, &c., must be added. This number will appear small, if we reflect on the amount of work. In England, punctuality is the soul of business; hence it is curious to see, at about nine in the morning, the state of the City. The steam-boats discharge swarms of passengers on the pier at London Bridge; the omnibuses cross each other, bringing crowds of clerks from the four cardinal points of the town. The clerks arrive, one after the other, in irreproachable attire; as neat, to use the English expression, as if they had just stepped out of a bandbox. Their walk, more or less solemn or hurried, is regulated by the movements of the clock, which they do not forget to consult as they go along. The Bank porter, with all the solemnity of a sentry, displays on the threshold his antique red coat, sumptuously trimmed with gold. The bees rush into the hive by all the entrances. The working day lasts from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. The strictest discipline is maintained in the offices. No one has too much to do; but it is insisted upon that it shall be done with the greatest precision and zeal. The

administrative system is so complete, that it at once indicates the slightest irregularity with the exactness of an automatic instrument. The salaries amount to nearly 240,000*l.* a year; to which may be added 20,000*l.* for pensions paid to retired clerks.

At 3 o'clock many of the clerks are free: some of them, however, return to the Bank in the evening—not for duty, but for their amusement. There is, in one of the wings of the building, a large, handsome room, which has been converted into a library. The idea of this library was originally suggested by a governor, Mr. Thompson Hankey, who offered the room and a donation of 500*l.* to set the affair going. The expenses are paid by a voluntary subscription of the clerks, amounting to ten shillings a head. There are at present 500 members, representing a sum of 250*l.* a year. The library possesses 9000 volumes, but is increased daily by voluntary gifts. I saw there several rare and costly works. The clerks can pass a portion of the evening there. A large fire burns in the chimney; a long table, covered with a green baize, is loaded with English and foreign reviews, while three small tables are arranged in the corners of the room, with a chess-board and a water bottle. They break up at seven in the evening. Many of the clerks live in districts a long distance from the Bank—others, indeed, even in the country—and only visit the library

to borrow volumes. It is only necessary to look at the covers to see that they have done honourable service. One of the heads said to me, with a laugh, "When you see, in a railway-carriage, a well-behaved stranger with a very greasy volume open in his hands, you may be sure that he is a Bank clerk."

The clerks who live in the environs of London, sometimes twenty or thirty miles from the metropolis, find more than one advantage in this system. They effect a saving; for the difference in the travelling expenses is more than compensated by a very considerable reduction in the house-rent; and the English railways also offer a very large reduction to season-ticket holders. Is this the sole consideration? Certainly not: I would even venture to say that it is but secondary. The English find a source of satisfaction in dividing the day between their work and their family. When the clerk has returned home to his country villa, he feels absolutely emancipated; he belongs to his wife, his children—he belongs to himself. In the evening, he waters the flowers in his garden, he cultivates his mind by reading, he adorns and embellishes his house—one of those pretty, elegant villas, such as can only be met with in the villages of England. When Sunday arrives, his mind, entirely disengaged from the burden of business, is cheered by the immensity of nature, by a group of fair-haired children, growing in the open

air and bright sunshine, like hardy young plants, and by the duties of domestic life succeeding those of public life.

There are several traditions connected with the Bank of England: all the inhabitants of London between 1840 and 1850 remember perfectly well the lady in black. One of the clerks was kind enough to describe to me, from memory, this somewhat fantastic figure. A Bank clerk had been hanged—it was not, as can easily be supposed, for his virtues—he had committed a forgery, a crime at that day punished by death, and stolen his sister's money. This sister, unable to endure such a blow, lost her reason through it. Under the impulse of delirium, she visited, or, to speak more correctly, haunted the Bank daily like a shadow, in order to find there again traces of her brother and of her money. That this brother had been executed was too painful an idea to enter her mind. She imagined that he had been carried off and confined in some mysterious dungeon by the bankers; hence her daily rounds in a building which, through an association of ideas peculiar to monomania, represented to her all that she had lost and all that she still hoped to recover. The mental condition of this woman moved the

* Only three officers have a right to live in the Bank apartments: they are the chief accountant, the chief cashier, and the secretary. The cashier and the accountant form, to some extent, the two great powers of the Bank: they act on each other in such a way as to exercise a mutual check.

clerks to pity; alms were given her, and the shillings and half-crowns only served to "water the root of a false idea," as our mad doctor Leuret would have said. She went regularly to the Bank, partly through interest, partly to pursue the image of her hallucinations. She was met now and then in her wanderings, roaming like a soul in trouble, dressed all in black, her head covered with a sort of hood, her cheeks daubed with rouge, her eyebrows painted blue, and with a begging box in her hand. The straight lines of her dress and cloak, her eternal and peaceful walking, the twofold melancholy attaching to a family mourning and the lamentable absurdities of mental alienation, attracted public curiosity to the lady in black for a long time. One day she was missed at the Bank: she was dead.

My readers now have an idea of the Bank of England, that vast reservoir whence gold and silver spread through a thousand channels among the nation, and whither they return by virtue of the same law which takes water from the sea to feed rivers and streams, which then return to the ocean. There is a fiscal question: what is the amount of specie in Great Britain? The amount of paper-money is perfectly well known: in January, 1858, all the bank notes circulating in England, Scotland, and Ireland amounted to about 35,500,000*l.* It is not so easy to determine the amount of gold in circulation. Some

estimate it at 40 or 50 millions, others at 80 millions: it is probable that the real amount vacillates between the two extremes. Such an accumulation of specie is doubtless great; but there is something greater still, and that is the strength which has produced it, and the mass of labour it represents. Gold and silver in the shape of coin do not constitute—and the English themselves recognize the fact—the real riches of a country. These riches are in the value of the land, which is daily augmented by skilful agriculture, in the merchandize which issues by millions of pounds from the factories, in the industrious habits of the population, in indefatigable labour, and in the development of credit institutions. Deprive a people of a portion of its specie, and it will doubtless suffer by the catastrophe; but if you leave it its genius and its liberty, it will in a given time repair its losses after the manner of Antæus, who rose the stronger after touching the earth. "The people and its industry," it has been said, "are the real fortune of a nation," and the man who said this was William Paterson, the intelligent founder of the Bank of England.

CHAPTER XIV.

DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAYS—OBSTACLES THAT OPPOSED THE ENTRANCE OF TRAINS INTO LONDON—REASONS FOR PROLONGING THE RAILWAYS — LIVING TIDES—LONDON AT NEW CROSS—EXTENSION OF THE LONDON BRIDGE RAILWAY—HUNGERFORD MARKET—APPEARANCE OF THE TOWN WHILE THE WORKS ARE GOING ON—THE FUTURE CHARING CROSS TERMINUS—THE NEW RAILWAY BRIDGE—THE ADVANTAGES OF RAILWAY LOCOMOTION INSIDE LONDON—THE COUNTRY UNITED TO THE TOWN—LONDON SEEN FROM A RAILWAY CARRIAGE — ENGLISH HOUSES — BLACKWALL RAILWAY — ASMODEUS IN A TRAIN—RAILWAYS SUSPENDED IN THE AIR.

THERE is one side on which modern industry verges on poetry, and this side is the grandeur of the reality, often more marvellous itself than fiction. The English railways offer this character of superb and gigantic positivism. Robert Stephenson had calculated some time before his death that if all the earth dug up for the construction of British railways were transported to and piled up on the same spot, it would raise heavenwards a mountain more than a mile and a half in diameter by a mile and a half in height. Every year five or six thousand acres of wood must be cleared with the axe, and three or four hundred

thousand tall trees are condemned to fall merely to furnish the sleepers which connect and fix the rails. Every moment four or five tons of coal and twenty or twenty-two tons of water vanish in steam upon the iron roads of the United Kingdom. Every second a distance of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles is traversed and devoured by thousands of people hurrying to their business or pleasure. Official reports show in fact that during 1861, four million trains, coming and going in all directions, went over 105,141,140 miles of railway; out of these four million trains, 1,902,069 passenger trains in England, 275,825 in Scotland, and 174,445 in Ireland, had conveyed a total of 173,721,139 passengers, or nearly eight times the entire population of the kingdom. The rest were goods trains, which have done away with horses, and cattle and coal trains. Apropos of these stunning figures, it is natural to remember that the luminous planet which governs the whole of our celestial system is 95 millions of miles from our planet, though recent calculations tend to bring it nearer, so that the English trains have traversed in one year a greater distance than that which separates us from the sun.

Are not such results well adapted to dazzle and confound the imagination? It is not, however, to these epic conquests of industry, nor to the wealth of the British railway system generally, that we wish this time to call our readers' atten-

tion. Another series of facts which deserves notice is being produced at this moment on a more limited stage. In the early days, when the discovery of steam was at first applied to the movement of carriages and the means of transport, this force was solely regarded as a means of communication between towns and villages. Who presaged at that time that railways would be able to bestride large rivers encumbered with the navigation of a vast commercial city? Who would have said that the locomotive was destined one day to supplant the horse, not only in the open spots where it enjoys to some extent its liberty of action, but also amid this network of streets, these forests of edifices and houses, which seemed to defy the progress of railways? Who could have imagined, even in a dream, that the fire dragon would be so thoroughly tamed as to carry you from one quarter of the town to another, deposit you, as it were, at your own door, and humbly attend the hour of your business or your visit? Who would have thought, in a word, that trains were destined to dethrone omnibuses, after dethroning stage-coaches? Such, however, is the problem which the capital of England is trying to solve.

On the birth of railways, the English parliament decreed that no locomotive should enter the streets of London. The North-Western railway must content itself with drawing its carriages up

to the Chalk Farm station by means of a rope and pulley. At a later date, and even after the villages of Great Britain had been connected together by ribbons of iron, not one of the great lines had the courage to penetrate frankly into the town properly so called. It might be said that they recoiled with a sort of respectful terror before the heaps of buildings they would be obliged to level. The most difficult obstacle to surmount was the expense. Once they entered the bills of mortality, the railways would be forced to cut their road through houses which would only be given up at fabulous prices; but it was above all the factories, shops, and offices, that demanded enormous compensation. One fact will furnish an idea of the power of this obstacle. In the neighbourhood of St. Paul's a very small piece of ground was valued a few years ago at the enormous sum of 66,000*l*. In face of such claims, the boldest undertakers of railways must satisfy themselves with skirting the suburbs without attacking the heart of the town or the great centres of trade. And yet many considerations urged them day after day to leave the limits which prudence had prescribed to them.

For some years past complaints had been rife in London about the stifling of the circulation. Like the ebb and flow of ocean, the great tides of population in the streets of the English metropolis are regulated by the time and hour of the day.

It is not the moon, but the pressure of business that here causes an overflow of men and vehicles. Who has not stopped at times at least ten minutes in King William Street, or on London Bridge before he was able to cross the current of vehicles that shakes the causeway? I have seen English ladies claim in busy hours the assistance of a policeman to find their way between the heads of the horses that press on and succeed each other incessantly.* For the observer this crowd is a spectacle, and he will not complain at seeing defile before his eyes, in this living stream, all the ranks of society strangely confounded—the sad and hideous apparitions of misery by the side of the most splendid garments, luxury draped in silken rags, and the draymen with their plump faces and ruddy complexion elbowed by gaunt hunger. Everybody, however, is not an Addison,

* Here again the trusted eloquence of figures will say more than any arguments. In ten years the number of persons who pass over London Bridge has been increased in incredible proportions. Here is a table which will indicate the movement of the vehicles on certain days at different points of London between 8 A.M. and 8 P.M.

London Bridge	18,179 per day,	1841 per hour	
Cheapside	13,512 „	1361	„
Ludgate Hill	10,626 „	1164	„
Holborn Hill	10,078 „	1024	„
Temple Bar	9,883 „	1103	„

To this must be added the circulation of pedestrians. On March 16th, 1859, Mr. Whittle Harvey, the City Police Commissioner, had London Bridge watched for twenty-four hours, and counted 107,074 passers. There were in addition 60,836 persons in the vehicles, the number of which amounted during the twenty-four hours to 20,444.

and practical men accuse this block of vehicles and these undulations of passers of retarding the progress of business. Liberating the town from this excess of population is the dream of all the English who have turned their attention to the road system of London.

Who could be more interested in such a question than the undertakers of railways? They naturally asked themselves whether there would not be a profit to them in seizing on a great portion of the locomotion, which is now served by cabs, omnibuses, and the other modes of transport. Would there not be, on the other hand, an advantage for the public? London is a province, a world, a city which does not begin and finish anywhere. It costs more time to go in an omnibus from London Bridge to Bayswater than to travel from London to Brighton by rail. After suppressing, or at any rate reducing distances in the country, their full weight was felt in the interior of large towns in the connexion of one quarter with the other. These considerations were silently resolved in the minds of engineers for some time, and at last, about two or three years back, the conquest of London by steam was decreed. This resolution gave rise to two perfectly distinct series of operations—the continuation within London of the great national and even international lines, and the establishment of a metropolitan railway on an entirely new system.

Let us first direct our attention to the old railways which are now being prolonged and brought into the central districts.

At the corner of London Bridge, Surrey side, rises a vast building, the London Bridge Station, where all the great means of communication with France and the continent converge. Thence also starts a huge trunk, whose iron branches are detached at regular distances, and cover with a thousand secondary lines the entire surface of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex. Hitherto this peculiar line, however, toward which so many other lines radiate, has not dared to advance into London beyond the entrance of the Borough. The projectors of the railway believed that they had already effected a great deal by piercing a route through the houses of a poor but industrious district. Any one who travels from London Bridge to New Cross can form an idea of the enormous mass of property which had to be bought and destroyed. The iron road, of very considerable width, runs for a long distance on brick arches, from which you notice, at a certain depth, rich kitchen gardens, streets, and houses, whose slate roofs are grouped and border both sides of the lines, without attaining the level of the parapets. A still better way of judging the importance of the works is in visiting on foot the part of the town crossed by this suspended railway. The old streets, which had a natural com-

munication with each other, are now connected by viaducts and tunnels.

After so many sacrifices, however, this railway feels at the present day the necessity of pushing its pillars of Hercules further on. Anxious to obtain a portion of the circulation of London, it is about to dash into the heart of the town at Charing Cross, crossing the river thrice, and thrusting branches out from one bank to the other. Those who are acquainted with the populous districts situated in the track of this line, the narrow streets which are entangled in the Borough like a skein of twine, the masses of houses that press against each other on the south side, will easily form an idea of the compact mass of walls and masonry it was found necessary to pierce in order to open a passage for the new railway. In England there is no law of forced expropriation on account of public utility; or at least it is in another form. The constructors of railways are hence obliged to obtain from each householder for a settled price the right of pulling down the buildings which stand in the track of the line. And yet what enterprise has ever yet been impeded in England by the want of a law, whose advantages or inconveniences I do not intend to discuss here? It is certain that the most gigantic projects have nothing to suffer from liberty, and are accomplished among the English by amicable arrangement, just as well

as they are effected elsewhere by disagreeable constraint.

The direction of the line now in process of construction was announced long beforehand in London by ruins and demolition. Generally the buildings which stood in the quarters menaced with destruction are not greatly to be regretted. Perhaps this very work of demolition will be a blessing for some inhabitants of London. The cutting through will introduce air and light into impenetrable masses of houses. It will light up lanes and alleys which resemble the unhealthy depths of a virgin and marshy forest, and it will compel some owners of adjoining streets to make alterations in the houses they let to the working classes. I come to this judgment from what I was told one day by an Englishman owning a house close to the Blackwall line. "So long as my tenement," he said, "resembled, or nearly so, those in its neighbourhood, it kept up a pretty good countenance; but from the moment when, through the making of the railway, it was exposed to the broad daylight, discovered, and watched from top to bottom by the trains that passed every moment, it felt so ashamed of its ugly looks that it gradually threatened to fall in, and I was obliged to pull it down and build another on the same site."

Amid the scenes of demolition which the whole length of line offered, a great ruin was most

noticeable about six months ago. I allude to Hungerford Market. It seemed as if an earthquake had passed that way, so singular was the appearance of the spot, with fragments of tottering walls, half-exposed cellars, remains of stairs that no longer led anywhere, columns thrown down, and old sanctuaries of domestic life violated by the pickaxe of the demolishers. Hungerford Market, opened in 1833, succeeded on the same site another market built in 1680 by Sir Edward Hungerford. It was divided into two wings or side galleries, occupied by dealers in fish, poultry, vegetables, and fruit. In the centre was a large hall, to which Londoners, but more particularly foreigners, went to enjoy an ice or coffee. At the present day this market is only a memory; the ground has been almost entirely cleared, and enormous building works have succeeded the demolition. Brick arches already mark the spot where the head of the new station will be thrust out. In the place of the old market will rise a terminus to which the name of Universal has already been applied, because it is proposed to bring together there all the great lines which intersect London, or will do so ere long. The Charing Cross terminus will in this way be the centre of the English railway system—that vast spider's web which communicates by innumerable threads with the whole of Great Britain and Europe.

I should certainly not tell the truth were I to

say that these great works of public utility contribute to the embellishment of London. The terrible railways respect nothing in their passage. They deprive an edifice of a portion of its symmetry by elbowing it; they deprive it, without even touching it, of the air, space, and surroundings, which it needed in order to look well. These great perpendicular walls, these tunnels, these passages, these gloomy and damp arches, which compel humiliated vehicles and pedestrians to pass through the Caudine forks of industry, these wooden bridges, these planks all black with tar, which brutally cross the streets on a level with the roofs of the houses, may all distress artists; but what is to be done? Our age wishes to go quickly, time is money, and the English do not hesitate at all over the nature of the means which may lead them to their object. Let us then forgive these new roads, which careless of elegance, and not troubling themselves about what stands in front of them, run from one point to another with the implacable resolution of a straight line.

Perhaps these sacrifices made to the handsome appearance of cities will find a compensation in the structure of the stations, the only modern edifices on which English architects have really imprinted the genius of their race. What grandeur there is in these vast arches, which seem to have been bent by the hand of giants! What boldness in the prodigiously long and wide

glass roofs that protect the station! What a feeling of strength, allied to a certain richness of architecture, in these vestibules of colossal aspect, which might be taken for the anteroom of a Babylonian palace! Do we not act wrongly in restricting the idea of monuments to palaces and churches through an association of historic facts whose influence it is easy to explain? Must not architecture undergo the pressure of the times like the other arts? Why, in an age of industry, should not termini and railway stations, though in no way allied with the Greek style and the phantasies of Gothic art, express, by an ensemble of characteristic features, the might of the interests that transform men and cities?

One of the novelties offered by the system now applied to the locomotion of trains in London is the construction of railway bridges over the Thames. Crossing rivers by steam is not, I confess, an extraordinary fact. During a quarter of a century the English have built at home railway bridges at the rate of a thousand a year, and some of them are masterpieces of boldness, which have made the glory of more than one engineer. If we look at the greatness of the difficulty conquered, the viaducts thrown over the Thames will not stand a comparison with the Menai tubular bridge, which has immortalized the name of Stephenson. What there is peculiar in the series of operations which now occupies us, is the con-

veyance of impetuous locomotives and trains of interminable length across a wide and sullen river, swollen with traffic and still sufficiently near its mouth to be subjected to the fury of hurricanes and spring tides. There was a time when the London bridges excited the surprise and admiration of foreigners. Even at the present day no one can pass in a steamer under London Bridge without being struck by the boldness and noble curve of these long stone arches, valiantly supported on a few massive pillars. Well, the triumph of material force is shown far more strikingly in the construction of the railway bridges destined not to carry vehicles, but trains. Three bridges will cross the Thames, to connect the City, Holborn, and Charing Cross, with the system of railways in operation on the south side: of these three viaducts only one, that at Hungerford, is sufficiently advanced to enable us to form an idea of the character of the works.

Up to this time there had been a suspension bridge at Hungerford, swung in 1842 by I. K. Brunel. It was held up by iron chains, and at either end supported by two brick turrets of a rather original design. At present this old bridge has not entirely disappeared, but we may say that it has been seized, devoured, and absorbed by another construction of a very different form, which has been in a state of development and

growth beneath it for months. The iron chains have been unhooked and sent to Clifton, where they will support another bridge on the same model, a present from one city to the other. If the character of the first Hungerford Bridge was slightly pretentious, that of the second is, on the contrary, a formidable energy of resistance. The latter is supported on stout iron columns, and sustained through its entire length by monstrous struts of forged iron. Elegance must not be expected from such a Cyclopean construction; but at the sight of these great works, we experience a feeling of stupor and, as it were, a haughty confidence in the power of man. The stern rudeness of the forest of columns and the imposing nudity of the black metal, harmonize however, very well with the gloomy and stormy colour of the river. The iron viaduct is recommended by other qualities: it is, in spite of its massive appearance, the lightest, most solid, and least expensive that has ever yet been built, if we regard the conditions and difficulties of the undertaking. The vast pillars composed of enormous cylinders of cast iron, added piece by piece, and placed one on the other in the shape of tubes, heavily rest on the clayey bed of the Thames, into which they sink several feet. These hollow tubes have been filled up with brickwork and masses of old iron, so as to give them the immovable firmness of a rock. Such supports will, in fact, be

subjected to rude trials; the load which the bridge must be capable of bearing has been estimated by the engineers at 1500 tons. The colossal viaduct will be at the same time a railway bridge, double the width of all those existing in the United Kingdom, and a crossing for foot-passengers thrice as wide as the old suspension bridge; one third of this vast edifice will in addition be occupied by the terminus. It was difficult to prove more strikingly to what an extent the science of the English engineer defies the elements and obstacles. Oh river, where is thy victory!

The Charing Cross viaduct is still in course of construction: in order to find a railway bridge finished and opened in London to the system of steam communication, we must go up the river as far as Chelsea; here we shall find a railway bridge which already connects the Victoria Terminus and Great Western line with the Crystal Palace railway. The situation is in itself picturesque. On the right, and a little higher up the river, extend the gardens of Chelsea Hospital, which in summer form an agreeable mass of verdure: on the left is laid out Battersea Park, with all the natural ornaments of a true English pleasaunce. The banks of the river, open and covered with grass, still retain at this spot a certain rustic air. The Thames itself is not yet the dark and toiling river which it will soon become on penetrating

into the heart of London. We might compare it to a robust countryman who, on entering the town where he is about to set sturdily to work, still retains a few traits of his rustic simplicity. The river opposite Chelsea still remembers the tranquil banks, the rich pasturage, the tall trees, the herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, of which it caught glimpses after leaving its source; but above all it recals the bands of white swans, which it has met since passing Richmond, and which captivated by the sweetness of these enchanted banks, float bravely among the steamboats. The new viaduct does not deprive the landscape of any of its poetry; on the contrary, it adds a feeling which is wanting in nature, that of material force conquered by the mind. This railway bridge is composed of five symmetrical arches, entirely constructed of iron, to which must be added on land six brick arches on one side and four on the other, forming altogether a length of nearly a quarter of a mile. The first time I visited this light and bold monument of the power of man, the sky was clouded, as it is so often in London, though without threatening rain; large beams of whitish light fell from a sun concealed by the mist upon the roofs and towers of the town, which faded away in the distance. All at once an engine dragging a chain of carriages appeared at the opposite end of the bridge, and blew out in the air its banner of smoke. I

watched it advancing in a straight line with the majestic regularity of a force which devours space. At this moment a steamboat passed under the same bridge; the two jets of steam and smoke were blended in a paternal cloud which, driven by the wind, bore to the left bank the glorious testimony to the conquests of industry.

Further westward, though still in London, there stands another railway bridge, which will very shortly connect Walham Green and Kensington with the South Western lines. Where this movement will stop, no one can say. The English Parliament is daily besieged by new plans and new demands for concessions. Ere long the number of railway bridges will equal and perhaps surpass that of the ordinary bridges over the Thames. All these prolongations of the old railways inside the town, cordially tend to realize a double design. In the first place there is a desire to connect the provinces and foreign countries more intimately with the British metropolis. The traveller who starts from Paris will no longer solely come to London by train, but he will also indicate beforehand the part of London, and so to speak, the hotel where he intends to put up. In the event of his selecting the Charing Cross Terminus, a step from the Haymarket, he will be able to breakfast on the same day in the Palais Royal, and spend the evening, if he think proper, at Her Majesty's Theatre. The other

object which the promoters of English railways propose to attain is to reduce for their own profit the circulation in the streets of London. It has been calculated that the Charing Cross Terminus, by giving immediate access to all the great continental lines, will relieve the Strand and the streets of the City of seven or eight millions annually of the thirteen millions who go through them at present from the west to London Bridge or further.

The extension of the metropolitan railway system will also offer several advantages to those who reside in the environs of the town. London is the great laboratory of England; everything is transformed there into gold; but people live there as little as they can. The City merchants, the lawyers of Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn, the Government clerks at Whitehall, though they come every day to London, escape from the smoky atmosphere so soon as the hour for business has passed, and hasten to take refuge in the country. The railways have powerfully contributed, as may be supposed, in thus giving a double phase to the life of the English. But however sweet and perfumed summer evenings may be in villas distant from the capital, however fresh the breeze in these nests of flowers and leaves, men, and women more especially, did not intend on that account absolutely to give up the pleasures of London. Several railway managers

have thoroughly understood this want, and have established trains which leave London at half-past twelve at night. The sole obstacle hitherto was the distance that separated the stations from the site of the theatres, concerts, and evening amusements. This obstacle is about to be surmounted, and the inhabitants of the country will be carried in a very short time from the districts of London, which never sleep, to the solemn repose of slumbering nature.

We may already ask ourselves what spectacle will be offered to travellers by these roads, or, to speak more correctly, these streets of iron suspended above the paved streets? Will not a steam-view of London allow us to discover some new phases of English life? The wish expressed by many an English novelist is to have the power of taking the fronts off houses by some magical process. This wish can nowhere be more easily explained than among the English. In Italy, and even in certain southern parts of France, private life, as well as public life, runs about the streets. People work, suffer, or rejoice as they breathe in the open air. It is not necessary to have lived long in London to know that it is quite different here. English society, with its virtues and defects, its shadows and lights, its weakness and greatness, can fully hide itself beneath the mystery of the domestic roof. The veil which the inhabitants of Asia throw over the

face of women, England extends over the family life. If we look at the form and building arrangements of the houses, we perceive at the first glance that they have been especially built to protect the *pénates* from the indiscreet curiosity of strangers. As a general rule, the Englishman does not like neighbours; that is to say, fellow-lodgers. He hates, as he himself says, the antipodes in his house, and does not like to have people walking over his head. The result is, that all those who have the means take on lease or buy a house in which they shut up their household gods.

The physiognomy of these houses, which are nearly all built on the same model, indicates the object which has guided the architect. In certain quarters of the town these habitations are masked by a front garden, which completely isolates them behind a curtain of foliage. Most usually, however, they are only separated from the foot pavement by a railing; but this railing is the sacred limit which protects the individual property. Behind this barrier there opens a moat or trench, which reveals the lower part of the house. This underground floor, which is beneath the level of the street, breathes through windows which are most generally defended by iron bars. Here are situated the kitchen, offices, and servants' rooms. The coal and other provisions are taken down by an independent flight of steps, which usually com-

municates with these underground places. The architect evidently had the intention of separating the inferior services from the other functions of domestic life. A flight of white steps, washed and cleaned every morning with minute care, and thrown like a drawbridge across the moat in which are the offices, leads to the front door of the master of the house. From this point there is generally an elevation of three storeys. In the first are the drawing and dining-rooms, in the second the bed-rooms, and in the third, or under the roof, the servants' rooms. All the windows are veiled inside by long curtains drawn closely together, and only allowing at times a glimpse between their folds of a small table, on which lies a large gilt-back Bible. I am here drawing the picture of what might be called bourgeois houses; those of the working classes are built after a slightly different pattern; but in every case they conceal much more than elsewhere the secret of their joys or their wretchedness.

In thus walling up their interiors the English have up to this time left railways and trains out of their calculation. The houses, built after a plan admirably adapted to the manners of the country, opposed victorious barriers to those who examine them from top to bottom and from the front; but will the same be the case when they are exposed on all sides to the glances of the

curious? Can it be that Asmodeus, the limping demon so frequently invoked by English novelists, has at length appeared in the shape of a locomotive, that fiery monster with a breath of sulphur and coal? In order to answer this question, it is sufficient to consult facts; we may judge of what a journey through London will be in carriages running at a level with the roofs of the houses from what can now be seen on some railways. Let us take, for instance, that of Blackwall, which runs through Whitechapel. We may say that before the establishment of the railway this quarter was to some extent unknown to the English themselves; it was discovered only a few years ago by travellers on the line, and the sight of the habitations, suddenly unmasked by the passing through of the railway, doubtless contributed in calling the attention of social economists to one of the most unfortunate districts of London. The suburbs of the English metropolis, when regarded from the railways that already traverse them, only offer to sight at various spots an ocean of tiles blackened by the smoke which rises and falls, and commanded by the spires of the churches and lofty masts. Elsewhere the train passes a window, at which a poor girl is carelessly fastening up her hair. One of the ornaments of these windows, even in the most wretched districts, is very often a row of flower-pots. A society has been recently

formed in London to encourage a new style of horticulture applied to these hanging gardens. It holds an exhibition twice or thrice a year, and gives prizes not to the rarest and most costly flowers, but to those which can best console the sorrow and nudity of the poorly-furnished homes. These window flowers, which require no attention, and display their beauty without any cost, resemble in some degree the families that cultivate them. A few inches of earth, a sunbeam, a drop of water, are sufficient to keep them alive, when the steam and the coal smoke do not stifle them. Even in the sickly parlour they retain affecting and simple graces, like the workwomen who water them.

Further on, the railway gently descends, and you are enabled to glance at yards and alleys in which, especially during the fine season, the various scenes of domestic life are displayed. Even in England the poor man lives but little at home: it seems as if his narrow abode and the poor character of his rooms impel him toward light and air. In these yards the women wash or hang up their linen, thus obscuring by damp rags the little sunshine granted them. Children abound, pampered, scolded, or caressed by the parents, for here extreme misery does not relax family ties. You may even see at times one of these poor mothers calling a naughty child's attention to the engine, that old Bogey that

scatters fire around, and carries away everything in its menacing progress.

This view of the different quarters of London seen from a railway is, besides, as may be anticipated, full of contrasts. In the richer suburbs the houses seek to defend themselves, by thick curtains and jalousies, against that indiscreet neighbour, the railway. It is not the less true that the English trains often reminded me of that imaginary animal, the creation of which was attributed to a disciple of Charles Fourier, and which was intended to watch from the street the interior of houses, by the help of its great height and an eye perfidiously placed. Many a traveller will exchange signals with his hand in passing a window he is acquainted with. The face of a young girl appears at a window-pane, doubtless attracted by the sound of the rolling thunder, but who looks for a long time with a pensive air after the departing train: you might say that her thoughts are going after the flying smoke. It is very curious to see, in the upper floor of some houses surrounded by gardens, a room which the English designate by the name of the nursery. This room, exposed to the sun, and in the healthiest part of the house, is the one in which the children dwell. Most usually the nursery is the only room in which there are no curtains to the windows: innocence has nothing to hide. Through a precautionary measure, easy of expla-

nation, the windows are only protected externally by a few iron bars. Through these bars of the sweetest prison in the world, which is guarded and watched from morn till night by maternal love, a group of blonde heads can be distinguished: with their eyes opened, and, as it were, dilated by curiosity, these children stand at the window and gravely watch the great bear pass, not without imitating the sound of the panting monster which takes breath at each station. But what is this house without inhabitants, without curtains, without a board announcing that it is to let, and without a fire alight? If you ask any dweller in the neighbourhood who may be in the carriage with you, he will tell you that it is a house haunted by ghosts: if you inquire of a lawyer, he will reply that it is a house in Chancery. Such is the name given to certain English properties which are under a species of interdict, owing to litigious difficulties. These houses, excommunicated by the law, may be found in some of the most populous quarters of London, where they form a gloomy contrast with the lively scenes that surround them. Now and then the train passes factories, breweries, and workshops, which, seen through this hurricane of speed, resemble ant-hills: at night these large factories, though so black, are transformed into a palace of light.

What can be seen in the streets is even more

singular: here and there horses that pretend to run; a crowd in which pedestrians cross each in two lines, and on some days, a forest of umbrellas. All these details, moreover, disappear in the grandeur of the whole scene, in this immense city, in which three lines of roofs, belfries, and masts stand out in vigorous relief, one above the other. The latter succeed each other, in the direction of the Thames, for miles and miles. If a fire break out, the journey acquires a species of lugubrious attraction. I remember leaving London Bridge station, more than a year ago, at eight in the evening, at the moment when fire was devouring some large warehouses situated on the Surrey side, on the river bank. The railway itself had been for an instant menaced by the scourge. The fire, although already mastered, was going on with a rage which obtained for this event the name of the "Great Fire:" Mr. Braidwood, chief of the fire brigade, lost his life in it. On leaving the station, we passed through a blood-red sky; and on our left burst forth a tempest of flames, in which men moved about like shadows. On the houses bordering the railway could be distinctly seen the reflection of the Thames on fire; for the floods of oil, tar, and burning pitch, by running into the river, had to some extent kindled it. The locomotives, passing with the indifference of speed and subjugated force through the scene of ruin, confusion, and

calamity, soon plunged into the night, which was illuminated and reddened for a long distance by the violent reflection of the fire.

These railways, which are being daily constructed through London, throwing down houses, and even edifices on their passage, cutting up into a thousand divisions this province of brick, and throwing viaducts over the humiliated river, must not, however, be regarded as an entirely new enterprise. It is much more the continuation and completion of an old system which, after hesitating for a long time, through motives of economy, to take the town by assault, has ended by vigorously attacking it on all sides. The method employed to construct these railways, which is very good in the country, arouses several objections in the interior of towns. Antiquaries reproach it with effacing reminiscences; and artists, with disfiguring promenades. Positive minds do not regard without fear the enormous sums which are swallowed up in the works of demolition. These very serious considerations gave rise, a few years ago, to two series of projects. The first was that of aerial railways, which were to pass over the roofs of the houses. To support these lines of rail, enormous works in masonry would be requisite, which would have formed the streets of London into a series of gloomy and grand arcades. This plan has not been realized, and never will be so; but we can

judge of the effect it would produce by what is now going on in certain parts on the line formed by the old railways. Does not such a system, by facilitating circulation on the one hand, offer numerous obstacles to it on the other? It blocks the streets with pillars, obscure passages, and massive viaducts. After the plan of aerial railways had been rejected as impracticable, another and quite different scheme was proposed. In alluding to a fabulous being, Indian mythology records that undecided Nature asked herself one day, whether it should fly or dive: after due reflection, she created a dragon, destined to fly in the interior of the ground. This is the history of the locomotives condemned by the Metropolitan Railway to follow the rails of an underground line, which passes beneath the streets of London, instead of over them.

CHAPTER XV.

THE THAMES TUNNEL—ORIGIN OF THE METROPOLITAN RAILWAY —OPENING OF THE WORKS—PECULIAR CONDITIONS OF THE NEW LINE—ACCIDENTS—THE FLEET SEWER—THE STREETS BLOCKADED AND THE INHABITANTS PUT IN QUARANTINE— A FEAST IN A SEWER—AN UNDERGROUND BANQUET—LIFE OF ENGLISH NAVIGATORS — WHAT THEY ARE ABROAD — HONOURS PAID TO STEPHENSON—OPENING OF THE LINE.

THERE is an affiliation for the enterprises of industry as well as for works of art. In the same way as connoisseurs easily refer an edifice, a statue, or a picture to a prototype, so engineers establish family ties between the great works of public utility. From this point of view the Metropolitan Railway has an ancestor in the annals of architecture as applied to civil engineering, and that ancestor is the Thames Tunnel. What foreigner has not, while in London, visited this eighth wonder of the world? Who has not given himself the pleasure of passing under the Thames between Wapping and Rotherhithe? The engineer Isambard Brunel, whom the French claim,

and justly so, as one of their fellow-countrymen, but whom a long residence in England had identified with the character and resources of the nation he proposed to serve, commenced this Tunnel in 1825. The idea and the mode of operations were suggested to him by a mollusk, the *teredo navalis*, whose manners he had studied, and which Linnæus called the calamity of the seas, *calamitas marium*. Following the example of this borer, which advances covered with a cylindrical shield, and devours its way through the hardest wood, Brunel constructed an enormous shield under which one gang of workmen removed the soil, while another lined the cavity with brickwork. My readers will remember the obstacles and accidents which several times arrested the progress of these miners. At length, on March 25, 1843, the great undertaking was completed, and the river conquered unawares gave a passage beneath its waters to the inhabitants of London.

At the present day the Thames Tunnel is an object of curiosity much more than a connecting link between the two banks. It is reached by two shafts, one situated in Wapping, the other in Rotherhithe, which have spiral staircases. The walls are covered with coarse and high-coloured pictures representing views taken in England and various parts of the colonies. On reaching the bottom of one of these shafts by which the light of day descends, the visitor enters the dark part

of the Tunnel, and is obliged to cross through it by the light of gas. In proportion as he advances in this stony intestine, the visitor, over whose head sailing-vessels are doubtless floating at the moment, loses more and more all notion of the outer world, absorbed as he is by the strangeness of this daring and taciturn locality. The Tunnel is composed through its entire length (1200 feet) of two passages arranged side by side like the barrels of a gun, but communicating with each other at intervals by side passages. In spite of the numerous shows intended to enliven the darkness by attracting the curious, this melancholy Tunnel remains a very unproductive undertaking from a financial point of view: it is not even finished. The expense which must be added to the original cost of the construction in making a carriage-road at either end, has hitherto made the shareholders recoil. Never has human effort perhaps better demonstrated the vanity, in certain cases, of works the most earnest and most worthy of admiration. Defy the elements, overthrow the most formidable obstacles, begin and renew twenty times the struggle against the waters, against the entrails of the earth, against night, and do all this in order to build a bazaar in which children's toys are sold and where idlers come to fall into ecstacies: *ut pueris placeas et declamatio fias.*

The idea of the Metropolitan Railway has some features of resemblance with the Thames Tunnel,

and yet this time the object has been very different. The point was to open, not under the Thames, but under a stream of wayfarers and vehicles, a large artery along which a perpetual current of traffic and passengers might circulate. This idea dates back to 1852, and was first proposed by Mr. Charles Pearson. About 1854, various plans were investigated and rejected, and it was finally resolved to make a railway through, or to speak more correctly, under London, between Farringdon Street and Paddington. In 1859 the money difficulties inseparable from every industrial undertaking were smoothed down, and the Metropolitan Railway Company was formed by means of subscription. Shortly after the works were commenced. The engineer was Mr. George Fowke, and the contractor Mr. Jay. In the first place shafts were dug at different distances, along the whole of the projected line. One of the first I saw opened in London, was on an unoccupied piece of ground not far from the Great Northern terminus. These men who disappeared in the hole, or came out all black with earth, did not offer a very reassuring idea as to the fate reserved for the passengers. However this may be, the labourers, on reaching the bottom of the shaft, began making excavations and constructing tunnels. The ground generally proved favourable: it was what the geologists call by the name of London clay. At one or two

spots, however, to the great annoyance of the engineers, sand was met with, that natural enemy of underground works. Some archæologists believed that these diggings would bring to light various relics of the past: but in this at least their hopes were deceived, for nothing remarkable was found. As an explanation must be offered for everything, the learned men then said that the districts undermined doubtless extend beyond the limits of London inhabited by the Romans, Saxons, and Normans. One thing is certain, that instead of the Roman coins which were sought for, nothing was found but shells, that is to say, simple geological medals, reminiscences of a time when the London basin resembled the Paris basin; but the navigators paid but slight attention to these vestiges of an extinct creation: a blow of the pickaxe destroyed generations of ancient mollusks.

Elsewhere railways more or less command external circumstances and the conditions of the ground they pass through. Here, on the contrary, the Metropolitan Railway was obliged to accommodate and submit itself entirely to the strange medium under which it was about to be developed. It was necessary to take the level of every street, and make that of the dark road conform to it. It was also necessary to avoid the houses. In England the law of property is inflexible: every house, or, at least, the ground on which it is built, belongs to its owner down to

the centre of the globe. It was the economical plan of the new railway to buy as little land as it could; and it must also refrain from passing under private houses, for which a compensation would have to be paid. The works met with another species of obstacle of a far more serious nature—in the sewers, gas-pipes, water-pipes, and even, here and there, in the tubes of the electric wire, whose network extends under the streets of London. Up to this time the only idea formed of towns was an agglomeration of buildings and houses, a system of streets and bridges, and an *ensemble* of public services exposed to the daylight; but the facts to which the new railway has just called the attention of the English indicate a novel aspect of modern cities.

Every open-air town is doubled by another subterranean town, the one communicating life to some extent to the other by a multitude of invisible apparatus. Every great city has, to use the language of anatomists, its internal and external organs. In order to form an idea of the obstacles which awaited the labours of the Metropolitan Railway underground, it must be remembered that every house in London has water laid on, and the majority of them gas. There are in the British capital eight monstrous waterworks, furnishing daily 88 million gallons of water, conveyed through the town in cast-iron pipes which ramify over a distance of 2530 miles. It has been

calculated that the giant London daily dried up a lake six feet deep, with a superficies of sixty acres. The consumption of gas is no less enormous: the total length of mains laid underground by thirteen companies is 1750 miles, to which must be added from 400 to 500 miles for service-pipes. At some spots, these different pipes cross each other, and are so close together that there is not room for a rat to pass between them. Before making the great cuttings, the labourers naturally were obliged to divert these subterranean organs much in the same way as in certain incisions the skilful and careful hand of the surgeon removes the nerves and arteries which prevents the passage of the scalpel. There is not a single railway which has offered greater difficulties, in spite of this short length of less than four miles.

What undertaking of this description is exempt from accidents? The Metropolitan Railway had them of various descriptions from the day when an engine took the bit between its teeth and plunged into a heap of ruins, up to the day, more melancholy still, when the interior works were invaded by the waters. The underground road had a dangerous neighbour in the Fleet sewer. Before it became a sewer the Fleet had formerly been a stream, and even a navigable one. Not far from the spot where the Fleet market formerly stood, there still exists Seacoal Lane, so called in remembrance of the barges which went there to

discharge coal. Another alley is called Turn-again Lane, because the passenger careless enough to venture into it found at the end a brook, and was thus obliged to turn back: With time the Fleet became a ditch, a drain, a species of open air sewer, the Fleet ditch. Filthy though it was, this ditch had the honour of being sung by Ben Jonson, Gay, Pope, and Swift. How many clear streams do not meet with such good fortune! The filthy memory of this Fleet ditch has passed to posterity like the historic vices and crimes which are often better preserved than good actions in the annals of poetry.

Not only did such a pestilence exist for centuries in the heart of London: many a scene in the past English life is connected with the Fleet ditch. On its road the dirty and slothful water-course encountered the Fleet prison, a celebrated debtor's jail, which still existed a few years back, and which Charles Dickens has marvellously described in "Pickwick." At the gates of this prison stood men who invited youths and maidens to come in and be married. The ceremony was celebrated inside the prison: it was the Gretna Green of London. When it was over, the newly-married couple proceeded to a gin shop to regale the clergyman. At the entrance of these taverns was usually suspended a sign representing a female and a male hand clasped together with the inscription, "Here marriages are performed."

It was in fact in such houses that the marriage registers were kept. What was the fate of these amours so lightly concluded? It is difficult to tell. In any case it was a sinister quarter. Not far from the muddy Fleet ditch, about which ugly rumours were afloat, rose the dark Newgate prison, in front of which criminals were hanged. If I may believe the moralists of the last century, several of the young couples who had not managed to avoid one noose fell head-foremost into another which was still more fatal. These abuses were at length suppressed by the Lord Chancellor, and afterwards by an Act of Parliament. In 1734, as the water was growing more and more black, the odious ditch itself was covered over with an archway, which, being gradually continued, at length converted the whole of the old stream into a London sewer.

Covering an evil is not curing it, and the Fleet, after having been an inconvenient rivulet, became one of the most obstinate sewers in the town. In 1846 it burst its stone belt, ravaged several houses, and spread over the neighbouring streets. Since that time, however, as its prison was strengthened, the inhabitants of London troubled themselves very little about the dull anger and repressed threats which this buried-alive stream rolled along underground. The mere name of the Fleet evoked more than one reminiscence in the annals of crime. Jonathan

Wild and Jack Sheppard, two famous English brigands, it was said, had haunted that black lurking-place. The works of the Metropolitan Railway met this formidable sewer thrice. On the first two occasions it allowed itself to be divided in order to make room for the underground way; but on the third, feeling no doubt indignant at the liberties taken with it, the Fleet burst its dykes, and inundated a large portion of the railway. It was a deluge, a tempest of mud. As the accident occurred on the night between Saturday and Sunday, very few workmen were at the scene of the excavations, and the alarm spread through the town. Ancient superstitions would not have failed to see in this catastrophe a savage protest of Mother Nature against those who had violated her mysteries and sacred gloom.

As regards the religion of nature, the Anglo-Saxon race is the most impious of all; it in no way respects the gloomy and violent majesty of the abyss. To all the forces of the universe, which were paid divine honours by the ancients, it opposes the intractable energy of its will; to the resistance and revolt of matter it stoically replies, "I do not like to be conquered." After stripping the sewer of its crown, it ended by mastering the forces of the current. Bags of earth, pumps, piles, everything was made use of, and the injury was reduced to two hundred feet of brick wall, which had to be rebuilt. Hence-

forth no confidence could be placed in the crafty and tempestuous character of such a neighbour. It was resolved to treat it severely, and the black Styx of London, imprisoned in a vast iron tube, was boldly led over the top of the railway. It was found necessary to treat in the same way another sewer, the King's Scholars Pond, which was also notorious for its encroaching and ill-temperate humour. The workmen, delivered from these two great enemies, were enabled to subjugate the other underground watercourses by measures far less costly. At a later date a Commission visited by the light of torches those parts of the Fleet sewer which had not been remodelled, and assured themselves that no further danger need be apprehended.

Of all the obstacles the most difficult to surmount were once again vested interests. All the whole of the works were carried on underground. Some streets of London were barricaded for weeks and months in order to open trenches and communications with the interior of the tunnels in course of progress. Several quarters of the town learned, very much against the grain, how a railway is constructed. First appeared in the open air, along the intercepted streets and roads, small wooden houses moving on wheels: next arrived waggons loaded with beams and planks; lastly the steam-engines, horses, carpenters, and a whole army of navigators, armed with spades and picks,

showed themselves. A noise of voices, hammers, and crowbars, which never stopped day or night, disturbed many a peaceful retreat. At regular distances rose enormous wooden constructions intended to mark the opening of the shaft-holes, where buckets and iron chains brought up to the surface the earth drawn from the depths of the cavity. This earth had scarce left the black holes ere it was taken in trucks along tramways, and then hurled down another shaft, with the sound of distant thunder, in order to be conveyed into the country along the already finished branches of the underground railway. In the midst of all this upsetting the adjoining houses naturally suffered.

A law of all great public works is the sacrifice of a few private interests to the general welfare; but who likes to be the victim designated by fate or by the choice of the engineers? Most of the houses in the New Road, for instance, have front gardens; I leave it to my readers to imagine the injury involuntarily inflicted by this earthquake; the palings removed or broken, the gravel trodden down, the flowers and shrubs sorrowfully hanging their heads, the whiteness of the steps, of which English servant girls are so jealous, unworthily sullied by a clayey mud, and the interior of the rooms covered with dust. All this was as nothing compared with the injury done to the shops in the streets obstructed by the works. In such

cases injured interests readily shelter themselves behind hypocritical fears and phantoms. A rumour was spread that the locomotives, in running under ground, would shake the foundations of the neighbouring streets, perhaps even the street pavement, and that London, thus undermined and shaken, would be exposed to a perpetual threat of falling in. The public good sense easily disposed of these chimeras; but the quarters which considered themselves injured did not yield so quickly to evidence, and signed petitions against the railway company, which, thanks to the gods, were not listened to.

The work went on in the meanwhile, though slowly. The English like to defy the horror of lugubrious spots by a festival. Last year I received a note from a friend informing me that he would expect me at one o'clock at Deptford Station, and that he would take me to an entertainment. As we went along, we came to a hole and a ladder leading into the ground. He politely invited me to go down. "After you," I said; "but I should like to know where we are going." "We are going to dinner," he replied with his British coolness. On reaching the foot of the ladder, which seemed to me very long, we found ourselves under an immense brick arch in a gallery lighted on either side for nearly the length of a mile, by gas jets. Tables abundantly covered displayed every sort of refresh-

ments. The band of the Volunteers was performing martial airs and 500 persons who had come from Greenwich were indulging in the noisy outbursts of a joy which was scarce checked by the strange character of the scene of the festivity. We were in the great sewer, very recently constructed, which is intended to convey the impure waters of London to Erith. I had seen this sewer being excavated some months previously, and had crossed the road more than once on plank bridges thrown across the mouths of the deep caverns. The inhabitants of Greenwich proposed to meet underground to celebrate the completion of the works and offer a testimonial to Mr. Webster, the constructor.

In August, 1862, the portion of the railway between Paddington and Gower Street being finished, the contractors of the Metropolitan Railway also resolved to celebrate this event by a banquet. On this occasion the banquetting-hall was, it is true, still underground, if we consult the street level, but at any rate there was almost daylight in it, owing to an ingenious system of lighting. It was one of the stations of the future railway. A wooden platform had been thrown across the station, and on this platform the tables were arranged. A band mounted on a dais which concealed the mouth of one of the tunnels, enlivened the silence of this naturally taciturn spot. Flags with the arms of Great

Britain, and all sorts of banners, lined the thick wall. Six hundred men, all employed on the works, and ladies and gentlemen, took their seats at the tables, which were lighted with gas at nightfall. When the appetite of the rude guests had done honour to the viands, toasts were drunk, accompanied by the band and hearty shouts. The party broke up at a late hour amid outbursts of tumultuous joy. These banquets have a grand and affecting character in England; besides, they seem to draw more closely the links of confidence between the contractors and the labourers.

The Metropolitan Railway had employed the best workmen of England, and consequently, one of the orators proudly added, "the best in the world." The English navvies form one of the most powerfully-developed corporations of labourers, and their manners have a most peculiar stamp. Powerfully built, rough, ruddy, and hairy, they thoroughly represent the Saxon race, such as we find it described in old historical records. Their clothes have the colour of the sand and clay; they are everywhere the same, and to some extent defy the ground to leave any mark on their clothes. There are still manor-houses and villages in the north of England and Scotland, where their arrival to begin a railway is feared, so fully accredited is the popular report which represents them as robust adventurers overthrowing everything in their passage. Their

conduct, however, is very far from justifying such apprehensions. They are generally exemplary in their behaviour to the rustics, for do they not belong to the same family? Children of the soil, the labourers cultivate it on the surface in order to nourish man; while the navvies cut it, throw it up, or pierce through mountains in order to open roads of communication for agricultural produce. It is certainly true, and I will not attempt to conceal it, that the navvies sometimes quarrel and fight among themselves; this doubtless results from an excess of strength which they feel the necessity of exercising away from their work. After all they are worthy fellows, and very often these knights of the fist protect the widow and the orphan on their way. When the outburst of passion has passed away, they display a generous feeling towards their conquered brethren and will help them when the chance offers.

At some spots, they live for some time in cabins hastily run up with their own hands in the vicinity of the works. Women accustomed to accompany them from county to county joyously share this rough mode of life. If storms now and then disturb the repose of the domestic roof, they are most frequently the fault of intemperance. The navvy is not at all saving; he likes to spend or, to speak more correctly, drink his week's wage. This improvidence is connected in him with the feeling of his strength and per-

sonal value; he knows that as long as he has arms, he will find work and means of existence. It would be difficult to induce him to lay up his money, but it is possible that he insures his life, the only capital he takes into account, and the loss of which might expose his family to danger. The English navvies are also distinguished by a rough and inordinate patriotism. They passionately love that Old England whose grandeur and prosperity they aid by their energetic labours: we might almost say that with them England is the world. I saw at Nivelles in Belgium some navvies who had come to make a local railway, undertaken by clever English contractors, Messrs. Waring. These worthy labourers were all amazement when they learnt that they were no longer under the flag of Great Britain. According to their notions, Belgium must belong to England, because they were breaking up the ground there, and the Antwerp coast was bathed by salt water.

The immense development of underground railways finds a wonderful support in England in public opinion. The English do better than merely encouraging engineers, they honour them. In order to be convinced of this, it was only necessary to see last year the inauguration of the monument erected to Robert Stephenson at Newcastle. I had never witnessed a more affecting ceremony: it was the festival of industry, the triumph of labour and the labourers. The work-

men of all the great factories marched through the streets with bands at their head and flags flying. In the midst of these emblems and these ensigns valiantly borne by robust hands, a small banner greatly attracted the eyes of the crowd; on the folds of this flag, which advanced at the head of the pitmen, could be read these simple words, "He was one of us." After having been a cow-tender in his earliest youth, Stephenson really worked at a later date in a coal-mine. At the base of his statue, which was uncovered amid the shouts of the mob, stand four figures, an engineer, a smith, a navvie, and a miner. It was by the assistance of these four bodies of men that George Stephenson subjugated space, abridged distances, and defied the obstacles of nature. Any other monument erected to military glory would not have affected me, especially in a foreign country; but this one appealed to the future and to the whole of humanity, without distinction of races; the conquests it celebrated had humiliated nobody, had cost neither tears nor blood, and tended to draw the nations together.

At the moment when this homage was rendered to a man who best personifies in England the progress of railways during the last twenty years, the Metropolitan Underground Railway was approaching its completion.

The expectations of the public had been several times deceived; the line had been commenced

three years back, but various accidents, as we have seen, had retarded the progress of the workmen in the interior of the soil. At the last moment, difficulties sprung up between the company and the Government on the subject of the signals. Imagination can conceive what a horrible thing a collision would be in these tunnels where an eternal night reigns. The nature of this railway and the ideas involuntarily attaching themselves to an underground line were, after all, not of a nature to inspire unlimited confidence. Hence we cannot sufficiently praise the Government inspector, Colonel Yolland, for having insisted on the most minute precautions against the slightest chance of collision. According to his orders electric indicators were added to the distance-signals. The construction of the line was in other respects considered excellent. One of the advantages of this system is economy. It is estimated that the whole expenses do not exceed 1,300,000*l.* A viaduct covering the same distance and passing in the open air through property and houses would have cost four times as much. Another circumstance which pleased me still more, was, that through all these dangerous operations, there was not a single loss of life to deplore. At length, all obstacles being surmounted, this railway, on which it had been intended that trains should run on May 1, 1862, was opened to the public on January 9, 1863.

CHAPTER XVI.

NEIGHBOURHOOD OF THE FARRINGDON STREET STATION—APPEARANCE OF THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY—KING'S CROSS—A FIRE WITHOUT SMOKE—DEPTH AND CHARACTER OF THE TUNNELS—INGENIOUS SYSTEM OF LIGHTING—TRAVELLING IMPRESSIONS IN THE DARKNESS—PROBABLE EXTENSION OF THE NEW SYSTEM OF RAILWAYS—INFLUENCE OF STEAM LOCOMOTION ON BUSINESS—SAVING OF TIME AND MONEY—WHAT WILL BE THE FATE OF OMNIBUSES?—PNEUMATIC TUBES—THE POST THAT GOES LIKE THE WIND—DECENTRALIZATION OF THE ENGLISH RAILWAY SYSTEM—TENDENCY TO UNITY—THE PRESENT WORKS OF LONDON COMPARED WITH THOSE OF PARIS.

FARRINGDON STREET Station, which may be regarded as the terminus of the Metropolitan Railway, stands on a road pierced through an old labyrinth of lanes and houses. The condition of the spot, though evidently temporary, has not changed during the last ten years; the site occupied by the demolished houses has remained empty; the waste ground surrounded by planks or clumsy palings, bare or covered with a mangy grass, and overlooked by old buildings, cracking walls and remains of buildings which form an

irregular line, offer a perfect image of a desolate quarter. The neighbourhood of the new railway will contribute, let us hope, to transform the monotonous and deplorable appearance of this street without inhabitants. The station itself, as if for the sake of harmonizing with the general character of the neighbourhood, is built of wood; you descend to it by a double staircase, and you then find yourself on a platform which offers nothing remarkable. Here you find trains ready to start every quarter of an hour. The carriages resemble in shape all other carriages, with this difference that they are wider, more comfortable, and the inside is liberally lighted with gas. On a black foggy day, an Englishman who entered a carriage in which I was seated, struck by the brilliancy of this artificial light, said to me, "I really believe that in London you must go underground to see clearly." After a while the locomotive starts: *she* is the name which the English engineers and stokers familiarly give to the powerful engine: is it not thus that poets designate their beloved? You travel during a few seconds in the open air, for it was found necessary to let the line breathe from distance to distance: but the train very soon enters the first tunnel. Regarded in its entirety, the Metropolitan Railway bears a striking resemblance with a serpent, whose head and tail are exposed on the surface of the ground and some coils of which rise here and

there, while the whole great length of the reptile is plunged into the dark ground.

The traveller has scarce had time to notice the darkness ere the whistle sounds shrilly beneath the gloomy arches, and the train stops at King's Cross Station. Here daylight re-appears. The light descends to the railway through a glass roof, which seems to be at a great elevation, but which in reality is not above the street level. This roof takes every shape which can best aid transparency: for this purpose it is displayed at one end like an immense fan. The train after emerging from the darkness for a moment, plunges again under ground to continue its journey. Judging from the experience I had acquired in the tunnels of other railways, I expected to be suffocated by the steam or smoke in this long cavernous vault. What was my surprise on finding that this was not at all the case! The locomotives of the Metropolitan Railway have been built after a new plan. They consume their own smoke and steam. One of the difficulties of the application of this system was, so I was told, adapting the engines both for tunnel service and open air service.

As the journey is continued under the dark galleries, you begin to undergo the influence of the locality. The phenomenon of night, which might be supposed to be the same everywhere, in the sense that it is a deprivation of light, appears,

however, under very different aspects, according as you observe it on the surface or in the bowels of the earth. In the former case, the darkest spots are penetrated by the icy splendour of celestial space, while in the latter the crushing intensity of the darkness, the dampness of the tunnels, and the earthy smell of the medium you pass through assume a ferocious air. It reminds you of shadows travelling in a tomb: with these intervals of night and light, the Metropolitan Railway represents even better than any other railway, the obscurations and illuminations of the mind. *Post tenebras spero lucem*, the traveller absorbed in the flanks of the serpent Avernus said to himself. There is this light, in fact, announcing itself in an increasing and crepuscular form. We are at Gower Street Station.

It is at this point that the best idea can be formed of the gigantic mole-work called the Metropolitan Railway. At either end of the station open two yawning caverns covered by an enormous brick arch, with a roadway wide enough to admit two lines of rails. Under one of these arches the engine, that force which finds its way under ground and in the night, has disappeared. Another is just arriving: it is at such a moment curious to approach the opposite tunnel, in front of which a blue or red light flashes. Circles of shadow fall through this crypt, gradually contracting until they are utterly lost in a black and

uniform distance. If you listen attentively, you at times catch a dull and buzzing sound, like that which children hear on placing a marine shell to their ear. This sound may be produced by a vehicle rolling along the pavement of the street, but most frequently it is the hollow echo of an approaching locomotive. You soon distinguish in the darkness its flaming eye, like that of a monstrous bat. At length the blood red light is reflected on the other side of the arch, and the shadows of the stokers are designed with exaggerated outlines.

Gower Street Station, like the one at Baker Street which succeeds it, is distinguished by a very remarkable system of lighting and ventilation. On either side of the tunnel are fourteen windows, if we can give such a name to air and light shafts. The daylight falls upon a perpendicular wall, covered with white varnished canvas; the fourteen windows receives this light, augmented by the reflection, and convey it along a canal also lined with shiny cloths, whence it is precipitated after the fashion of a cataract. Externally, that is to say in the street, this system of respiration and lighting is represented by two stone pavilions in a somewhat conventional style, which seem placed there for ornament, but in reality are air mouths with all sorts of orifices and openings. In spite of all these ingenious precautions and artifices, the light thus introduced

is of a dead cold, and produces a peculiar effect, like that of a sepulchre. It seems as if it were there only to remind us that there are somewhere over our heads, a sun, movement, and life. The real sun of the underground railway consists of gas and coal. It must be remarked that the nations of Asia seem to live in a state of dependence on the day star, which has determined the form and situation of the monuments, the customs, and the creeds, while the industrious nations of the north, and before all the Anglo-Saxon race, act to some extent against the sun, and in any case have liberated themselves from its influence by the power of the human will.

I am greatly afraid that these images of silence and darkness do not give any very agreeable idea of the Metropolitan Railway. In itself the line is certainly melancholy; but the interior of the carriages is gay. It is very rare for Englishmen to enter into conversation in a public conveyance with persons they do not know; here, however, the novelty of the spectacle, the necessity of cheating the night, and the surprise of travelling under ground, easily break the ice of the British character. The conventional but ever new theme of the conquests of industry, furnishes besides a subject for conversations which interest the national self-esteem.

At the present day the Metropolitan Railway stops at Bishop's Road, but it is evidently destined

to extend and ramify. One of the prolongations which may be regarded as already virtually decided is the continuation of the line from Farringdon Street Station to Finsbury, one of the most populous districts of London. There are, it is true, a few obstacles raised by local interests, but they will yield to the force of public opinion, which is becoming more and more biassed in favour of railways. Other branches will doubtless spread in various directions, and the moment may be foreseen when the great metropolis will have through nearly its entire extent two systems of steam circulation, one in the open air, the other beneath the streets. The City merchant, leaving in the morning his splendid Tyburnian mansion, will plunge for a few minutes into the interior of the earth, and will soon be installed at his desk in Cornhill.

The aerial or subterranean railways intended to intersect London would, however, have but slight prospect of material success, unless each of them were connected with the great lines of communication. It is thus that the Metropolitan Railway already touches in its course the numerous Northern and Western lines. When the Chatham and Dover line has crossed the Thames, and the line to Finsbury is completed, it will be connected with the Southern and Eastern railways. As this railway is chiefly intended to carry baggage and merchandize from one ter-

minus to another, it must receive life from the entire system, much in the same way as the organs of the human body are supported and developed, through a law of responsibility, with the other apparatus of motion and circulation.

In addition to the ordinary trains, which stop at all the stations, there are express trains that start every hour. Lastly, a clause introduced into the Company's bill compels them to run twice a day, at 6 A.M. and 6 P.M., a parliamentary train especially intended for artizans. The latter can go the whole distance (3¾ miles) in third class carriages for the small sum of one penny. Is it necessary to say what advantage this cheap mode of transport offers to men who are at work in the City, but who cannot live there owing to the high rents? Being conveyed through the streets of London is a saving of time and money for all classes. It has been calculated that 111 millions of persons journeying twelve miles each year on a railway employed half an hour in doing so; while with the old stage-coaches they employed an hour and a half in doing so. The number of hours saved by the new system of locomotion thus represents a total of 38,000 years. If it be now assumed that these travellers are occupied men, working eight hours a day at the rate of 3*s.* a head, this saving of time will be annually represented by an economy of two millions of money. These figures are not strictly

applicable to the series of facts we have now in view; I mean, the difference between railways and omnibuses; still it is indubitable that the substitution of one for the other in the streets of London will entail a large profit.

The vast change which has been introduced during the last half century in England into the system of artificial locomotion has exercised a great influence over the character of the inhabitants and the public prosperity. Before the age of railways the Englishman—and he allows it himself—was more robust than active; steam has to some extent spurred his physical and moral activity. The railway system, by extending and ramifying daily in London, where so many interests are at stake, must stimulate still more the business spirit and energy of labour. Here, even more than in other cities of the United Kingdom, the value of time is appreciated, and we know that the condition of success is speed. "Steam-engines shame the slothful and the indolent," a London artizan exclaimed at a public meeting; "the rapid locomotives arouse the tortoises from their sleep; they teach us that the world belongs to the force that acts, and strives to reach a noble object."

What will now become of the omnibuses and public vehicles? It is said that an English labourer of the good old times, on seeing the oak woods falling round his village, asked one day, in a tone of prophetic sadness, "How are we to feed

our pigs in future?" The acorn trees have since then disappeared from a great extent of the soil of Great Britain, and yet we have the annual cattle shows to teach us that the pigs still enjoy a formidable plumpness among the English. This lesson must urge us to be more reserved than the rustic philosopher in expressing our fears and judgments about the future. There are doubtless many instances of interests completely displaced by the new conquests of industry; but we have also seen old systems resist the shock of rival innovations, whenever they had a fair ground of existence. Are the London omnibuses menaced with the same fate which a few years back suppressed the stage-coaches on the high roads? Nothing announces the fact as yet. The wants of a great city like London are sufficiently numerous and complicated to support various sorts of vehicles simultaneously. Those omnibuses which could not sustain competition on the same routes as the railways will remove to other parts of the town into which they have not yet penetrated, and they will be welcome. In the meanwhile, the terminus of the Metropolitan Railway is besieged from morning till night by these old vehicles, which do not at all appear disposed to die. The omnibuses have even undergone useful alterations on their side; they are wider, more comfortable, and more ornamented than before. These old overthrown potentates

seem to be trying to hold their own against fortune by making a noise and displaying light. I do not believe that they will disappear so soon; they will be only obliged to increase their speed and reduce their prices. In any way the public will be the gainers, for rapid and cheap circulation are now the general wish in London.

This speed is not merely applied to the transport of travellers. In 1859 a company was formed, which proposed to set up in the town pneumatic tubes for the purpose of transmitting despatches and parcels with marvellous velocity. This company was authorized by Act of Parliament to open the streets and begin its underground operations. After a few experiments, it resolved to lay a permanent tube thirty inches in width between the Eastern terminus and North-Western post-office, Eversholt Street. In Feb. 1863 the inauguration took place, at which several officials of the Post-Office were present. Thirty sacks of despatches were placed in small trucks of a singular shape, very like a child's cradle. A vacuum was then formed in the long chamber, and the train, blown like a pea through a tube, reached its destination in a minute. It was enough to render steam jealous. The length of this line is at present but small—one-third of a mile—but the success has been so striking that the company is about to open works in Holborn for the purpose of developing the original line

and attaching numerous ramifications to it. It might be, perhaps, curious to study the history of modern languages by the light of industrial discoveries. Certain expressions, which once on a time had a reason, as for instance *courir la poste*, now only possess a doubtful and superannuated meaning. The old mail-coach crawls, if placed by the side of the locomotive, and the locomotive itself only trots, when compared with the service already performed by the atmospheric agents.

At the same time as the English are seeking every possible means to augment facilities of communication, they have been engaged, and especially during the last few months, in introducing a species of unity into their railway system. Elsewhere people would have begun with this: in England they nearly always end with this. An English naturalist, James Rennie, has written a book to prove that bees enjoy self-government. If we may believe him, in forming their cells, they do not act in accordance with any preconcerted plan, but the personal initiative and free will of each working bee preside over their operations. It is difficult to know exactly how bees work; but it is certain that the English follow the latter method in all their undertakings. Railway lines were at the outset made somewhat haphazard, in order to respond to the different wants of trade, industry, and agriculture. These lines, more or less independent of each other, have increased and

multiplied in a half century to such an extent as to form the most vast and complicated network in Europe; but, since the circulation has been served in Great Britain by so many trunk lines and branches, a new tendency is beginning to be developed; a desire is felt to connect these organs of motion together.

In order to attain this end, various plans have been proposed. A good deal is said about establishing a special board, entrusted with the duty of connecting the existing lines and those in course of construction, and making them into a whole. Whatever the method employed may be, it is certain that order will soon spring out of the rich elements which constitute the English railway system. There are two ways of understanding centralisation: it may be taken as the starting point, but it is equally possible to leave it out of sight at the outset, and allow the initiative and personal forces to act and satisfy local interests, while awaiting from the very force of things the moment when these various enterprises must become naturally connected and organized into a system. The English have selected the latter method, and when I look at what they have been doing during the last few years, and the exchanges of productions which the power of steam motion has developed in the United Kingdom, I cannot believe that they are clinging to an error. Any one, too, will see that the railway terminus,

by drawing nearer to the centre of the metropolis, must favour the establishment of that system of unity which is now so greatly desired in England.

The great works which are at this moment disturbing London all tend definitely, as we have seen, to a practical object. The English do not gut old districts in order to form strategic roads; they neither wish to stamp their capital with the effigy of a reign, seduce eyes by an indolent elegance, nor expel workmen from the centre of the town, and drive useful trades to the confines. What they wish above all is to open roads for business. They possess the talent of not running into debt for the construction of these gigantic works which, while facilitating the mutual relations of the inhabitants, must, on the contrary, enrich each with the wealth of all. Will these operations contribute in a certain manner to the comfort of the most numerous class? I will answer boldly in the affirmative. If I except extreme poverty, which, I confess, profits very little by all these changes, the mass gather daily the fruit of the immense sacrifices sown on the field of industry. The inhabitant of London has already at his orders more railways than exist in any capital of the world, and he commands a network of electric wires ever ready to transmit his messages and wishes from one place to another for a few pence. To several railway stations drinking fountains are attached, which pour out

for him gratis the purest and freshest water. All along the line he can purchase for a trifle newspapers, in which men dare to say everything. Even with a light purse he is in reality richer than a satrap of Asia or a nabob of India, for true wealth consists in the development of the means of action.

Heaven guard me, however, from attaching to these material advantages a greater value than is due to them. All this would be nothing, or a mere trifle, without that moral force of the English which watches, controls, and even directs the Government when it is required. It is from this liberty before all that Great Britain draws, as from a prolific source, the necessary vigour to augment the value of time, and to overthrow the material barriers that divide its interests. Its vast undertakings are nothing to the State, and are connected with no official scheme; on the contrary, they proclaim and strengthen day by day the great principle of English civilization—self-reliance.

A free people so powerfully attached to business required to become rich in order to extend its influence over the world. My readers, I trust, are now acquainted with the nature and power of this wealth.

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